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THE
OLD HOUSE AT SANDWICH
VOL. I.

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THE
OLD HOUSE AT SANDWICH

THE STORY OF A RUINED HOME

AS DEVELOPED IN THE STRANGE REVELATIONS OF
HICKORY MAYNARD

BY
JOSEPH HATTON

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. I.

London

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON

CROWN BUILDINGS, 183, FLEET STREET

1887

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# THE OLD HOUSE AT SANDWICH.

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## Part I.

### CHAPTER I.

“THIS HOUSE TO LET.”

I AM making a summer holiday excursion about a corner of the pastoral county of Kent and come upon the quaint, old-fashioned port of Sandwich. I am impressed with the remarkable way in which it has retired from the sea, gone inland, as it were, like a migrated city; gone inland, nursing its strange history and traditions, its memories of Elizabeth and the Armada, its memories of battle, murder, and sudden death; nursing, as it were, its commercial and social disappointments, and retiring altogether from a seafaring life. I wander about the old place and note its curious waterways, that wind about the town, forming natural moats to streets and houses; and in one instance excavating for itself a passage beneath the dining-room of an ingenious resident

who, by the contrivance of a trap-door, converts it into a convenient wine-cooler for summer dinner-parties.

It is an autumn day. I have noticed the extraordinary luxuriance of the wheat that grows upon the adjacent battle-field, nurtured, it is said, by the bones of the ancient combatants. I have explored the local cavern close by, and seen the autumn leaves drifting hither and thither on the wind; and at last, coming back to the old town, have found myself contemplating a somewhat dilapidated but rather imposing old house, I might almost call it a mansion. The painted sign upon the exterior, "This House to Let," is almost as yellow and faded as the ancient blinds that partially cover the windows as they blink in the setting sun. I am tempted to look over the railings into the old-fashioned garden, rank with weeds and flowers, but still suggestive of cultivated flower-beds and trailing roses.

I observe in a shaded corner of the garden a middle-aged man trimming a small grass-plot, the only cultivated spot in the grounds, a little oasis in the general desert. He looks up at me with a pleasant rubicund face, lays down his garden tools, and nods. I bid him "Good day," and say I hope I am not intruding.

"Not at all," he says.

I tell him that the notice, "This House to Let," and the dilapidated look of the place, have attracted my attention. I am idling away the day in Sandwich, and it has occurred to me to wonder why "this very desirable mansion" should remain unoccupied.

He does not reply, but, crossing the garden, comes towards me, opens a wicket, and, with no more invitation than a smile and a bow, I enter. He tells me that he is not a gardener, except in an amateurish sort of way; that he is not the owner of the house, nor is he the agent in whose hands it has been left to let; but that, in spite of his old jacket and the occupation at which I have surprised him, he is the vicar of the adjacent parish, and at my service. It is not necessary that he should give me this evidence that he is a man of education and a gentleman, for neither his occupation, nor his old grey coat, can disguise his quality and position.

"The very house, I should say, for Queen Elizabeth to have lodged in when she visited Sandwich," I said, looking around me.

"And you would say rightly," replied the vicar, in a pleasant, mellow voice. "Would you like to see the place?"

Receiving a reply in the affirmative, the clergy-

man laid down his hoe, put on his coat, and produced a bundle of keys.

He was the very picture of an old-fashioned rural dean. Squarely built, of medium height, he had a large head, from which fell a thick crop of silky white hair. A rubicund face, short white beard, and genial brown eyes, he had a sensitive mouth; and he stood firmly in his square-toed shoes. He wore a white neckcloth, and his coat was of a clerical cut, though a trifle threadbare, and there were traces of snuff on the collar of his waistcoat. A couple of old seals on a black ribbon hung from his watch fob, and his rusty black trowsers were a trifle baggy at the knees.

A queer old house, with dusty windows that blinked at you through half-opened shutters, and with creepers that tapped mysteriously and ghost-like at both.

"It was almost ancient three hundred years ago," said the vicar, "when good Queen Bess came here; but my memories of it are of recent date."

I climbed up into the glories of the timbered roof, the original woodwork of which had stood the honours of a siege in the olden days. A bat dashed by me, raising a cloud of dust, through which the sun worked a luminous beam that fell upon some

fresh sprigs of ivy. These pioneer shoots of a hardy plant had consumed hundreds of years in forcing their way among the old timbers. It was a unique picture, this dusty corner of the old roof, with its long column of light playing fantastically upon the obtruding ivy.

"And this," I exclaimed, as we stood once more in the old-fashioned garden that had an outlook upon the sluggish river,—“this is the house in which Queen Elizabeth was entertained!”

"Yes," said the parson, "she became the patroness of this town some three hundred years ago. The port had already decayed even at that early period in consequence of the gradual silting up of the harbour. Under her letters patent in 1561 (you will find in the local and other histories), Flemish settlers, workers in serge, baize, flannel, and other materials, settled here. They were privileged to hold markets; and to encourage and give countenance to the town, Elizabeth came here in 1573. The Corporation turned out and gave her a fine reception. The town records are worth looking up. They contain some curious information upon the subject. Among other things, the Corporation gave orders that the brewers should brew good beer against her Majesty's coming. She came, it seems, one Monday evening in August,

and lodged in this house until the Thursday following. The town was strewn with fresh gravel, rushes, and herbs, and decorated with flags and green boughs. The Queen, almost as soon as she rode into the town (she was on horseback), was presented with a Greek Testament and a gold cup worth £100. Henry VIII. had previously visited Sandwich, and he stayed in this house; so, naturally, Queen Elizabeth came here. On the Tuesday she was entertained with a combat on the water between two men on stages in boats, each protected against the other's spear or staff by a wooden shield. The Queen professed herself greatly pleased at the sport. Wednesday brought a more important exhibition—an attack upon a fort which was erected for the occasion. After a furious sham combat the fort gave in, and the assailants planted the Queen's flag upon the citadel, amid loud cheers from combatants and spectators. The next day it is recorded that the mayoress and the Jurats' wives gave the Queen a banquet of 109 dishes, on a table twenty-eight feet in length, in the local school-house. The dinner was cooked by the ladies of Sandwich, and her Majesty was so delighted with their culinary skill that, in addition to partaking of several of the dishes, she directed that others should be carried to her lodgings, and

she tasted these possibly at supper-time in the dining-room you have just inspected. There was something very practical in the educational display made for the Queen's edification on the fourth day. Upon a platform in front of the old school-house 120 English and Dutch children were paraded with their spinning-wheels at work, an exhibition of industry that was highly commended by the Queen."

"And I don't know," I said, "that under the reign of Victoria, who in some respects is not unlike her illustrious predecessor, Elizabeth, that our new school authorities can show a more useful example of practical education than the historical one you have so well described."

"You touch a broad question, and a deep," said the vicar; as he plucked some sprigs of sweetbriar, and sticking one piece in his coat, handed me another for mine, "and a question which has many sides. In these days we are apt to look back and plume ourselves on our wisdom; but the fine lady of to-day who can neither brew nor bake is to my mind a poor creature. If Mrs. Newbolde had thought as much of her pies as of her earrings, as much of the brightness of her kitchen pans as of the cost of her gown, as much of what her husband thought of his dinner as what the gossips of Sandwich thought of

her beauty and her bonnets, my dear dead neighbour would probably never have got drunk, but would have lived to die in his bed, famous and respected, with his children around him, and with the consciousness that his son, George, would have succeeded to his good name, and his daughter have been a comfort to her mother, and the sunshine of the dear old home he would have bequeathed them."

"Ah!" I said, "you that are old in years and experience, can look back and count the stumbling-places; but we that are young have to go blindly on, ignorant of the pitfalls in our path, not even dreaming that what seems to us a copse of flowers at the end of it is a yawning gulf, a poisonous morass, or the lurking-place of an assassin."

"It is pleasant to talk to a stranger," said the vicar, taking my arm and leading me to a break in the garden wall, over which we could see the river and the low-lying meadows beyond; "but I hope you and I may become friends; I have taken a fancy to you."

"Thank you very much," I replied.

"When I say it is pleasant to talk to a stranger," the vicar continued, "I mean that my neighbours are only with me and generally stick to old topics, and one understands their views and ideas as a rule

so well that it is easy to know what they will think about even a new subject ; while you have not only ideas, but they belong to youthful experience, and young people interest me. They are like that boat you see going out with the tide ; it was only built the other day ; it is small—a little coaster—but it is going to sea ; it will put in at strange ports, and will encounter storm and tempest ; it may return with torn sails and battered bows, and one day will be laid up hereabouts a shattered hulk, or it may go down in the deep waters and be heard of no more—who knows ? It should be well built and well found, its timbers tried, its compass sure, its captain wise, its watchman wakeful, its crew sober, the barque that lives on the sea and trades to and fro to foreign climes. And youth—how much more should youth be wary of itself ? But there, I must not preach ; that were too great a liberty to take with you ; though ‘a word spoken in due season how good is it,’ saith a great preacher ; and somehow the calm night, the solemn river, the evening song of the thrush, seem to invite solemn thoughts.”

The force of his words is impressed upon me as I watch the flowing river, slipping away to that sea which once covered the entire country, but has now

only left an inland reminiscence of itself among meadows and homesteads.

This old house of Elizabeth and the Newboldes is situated upon a narrow arm of the sea which has been left, as it were, upon the shore by Neptune as a token or relic of the days when great fleets anchored there, and warlike vessels assembled to go forth to meet the enemies of England at sea, or to conquer new possessions for the queen in previously unknown regions.

When I am about to leave, thanking the vicar for his courtesy, he makes some interesting and philosophical remarks touching the different influences upon the mind of a story that is past and a story that is current; a story that is full of tradition and the colour of a previous age; a story that we look back to, and one that is mounted with the familiar accessories of the period in which we live.

He tells me that, to his thinking, there is a greater human interest in the modern than in the ancient history of this old house, and in connection with which we might possibly discover the reason for that notice, "This House to Let," remaining so long without response on the part of persons seeking a "desirable mansion."

He thus piques my curiosity, and then, like the

genial philosopher he is, invites me to go home with him to dinner ; and since I feel so much interest in an old house, and can so well tolerate the conversation of an old man, he will tell me that modern story which is one of the most romantic and touching episodes of his clerical career.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE RUINED HOME.

I go home with him to dinner, and find his house just the quiet, snug place that should naturally belong to a clerical philosopher who is content to spend his days with his books, his garden, and his handful of parishioners, outside the great world of life with its struggles and its conflicts.

After dinner the vicar tells me the story of the love-making and marriage of an artist named Newbolde, a young eccentric painter, who had recorded on canvas many of the picturesque scenes of this corner of Kent, and who had wooed and married one of the prettiest young ladies in Sandwich, an orphan with a small patrimony. Newbolde had had a rival for the girl's hand, in a somewhat aristocratic young fellow named Lucas, who occasionally visited the neighbourhood from London. An educated young man, always well dressed, always calm and gentleman-like, Mr. Lucas had attractions likely to impress a thoughtless girl; but he was unpopular in Sandwich, if one could say that a man is unpopular in

a place which he only visited from time to time, and with which he had no social or business associations.

Mr. Lucas was said to belong to a good family, and had, among men, the reputation of being what is called successful with women.

Newbolde, on the other hand, was born in the district. His family, a middle-class one, was well known. He had, as a boy, developed a remarkable faculty for drawing, and under tuition as a young man had become a successful artist.

Mr. Lucas had been introduced to the girl through some family connection, and it was a matter for jocularly among her friends that he was "tremendously smitten." She was, however, already more or less engaged to Newbolde, and between the period of Lucas's last visit (he had gone abroad, and nobody had heard anything of him for several years), Newbolde and his sweetheart were married.

"I married them," said the vicar, "and a very pleasant affair it was. By my advice, instead of making a fuss about spending the honeymoon abroad, and going to some unfamiliar place to make amusement for waiters and others in a foreign hotel, I advised them on leaving the church to go home for good. They were a handsome couple. She was fair-haired and had blue eyes. A *petite*

figure, she was quite the belle of this old place, a trifle vain, however, and not of that constant, loving nature that Newbolde was ; but, as I said before, a pretty, attractive woman. I am an old bachelor, and it was always pleasant to see Newbolde work, and to talk to him of his prospects ; and I took a fatherly interest in the young couple, though I was but forty when they married, forty and a fogey.”

The vicar tapped his snuff-box reflectively, and pushed a decanter of old Madeira towards me as he continued.

“They had been furnishing the old house for many months before the marriage, and you can imagine nothing more refreshing than the enthusiasm of Newbolde in the work. I recall the time as one of the pleasantest periods of my own life, the little part I took in looking on at those two people decorating their new home : adapting that old house of Elizabeth to the Victorian era ; planting on the grand old base of British wainscoting the decorative touches of to-day ; placing on the grand old carved mantelpieces modern jugs and jars full of flowers that date back their perfume and beauty even before the Flood. You can hardly believe that twenty years ago that house was a picture of wholesome life and beauty, the garden a paradise ; though you may not

be surprised to know that all this was eclipsed by a domestic catastrophe, over which hangs the shadow of a cruel murder; the law had not evidence enough to proclaim it murder, but I do so without hesitation."

The vicar took a heavy pinch of snuff as he made this announcement, and handed me his box, as he went on to describe the marriage-feast and the settling down of the newly-married couple to their new duties and relations. Time goes on; two children are born, George and Margaret; and in the meantime, the result of the painter's success and the outcome of the sympathetic social qualities of his nature, Newbolde gradually develops a fatal disease—a passion for drink. The vicar describes in detail how Newbolde, from glass to glass, slowly but surely comes under the dominion of the demon, Drink; how he fails to fulfil artistic commissions; how his work degenerates; and how, in the midst of it all, Mr. Lucas turns up at Sandwich.

It seems that Mr. Lucas has met Newbolde in London, on one of Newbolde's necessary visits in connection with his art; that Lucas is at the time, or professes to be, a man of means. He meets Newbolde in an assumed frank manner; tells him that his dream, of course, has long since passed away; that they are, of course, no longer rivals, but friends.

He has travelled all over the world since then, and looks now at life with a man's practical experience, instead of viewing it from the standpoint of a boy's romance. He tells Newbolde that his friends are very few, his life a lonely one, and that he hopes Newbolde will look upon him, "for auld lang syne," rather as a brother than as the old enemy he possibly was years ago, under the influence of a foolish passion. He tells Newbolde that it is the duty of the victor to be kindly to the vanquished, and he can only say that, if Newbolde or his children should ever want a friend, he may count upon him, Lucas, to the last penny he has in the world, the last drop of blood he has in his veins.

Newbolde is a gentle, tender hearted, unsophisticated fellow, and accepts these overtures in a friendly spirit. Whenever he goes to London, Lucas invariably meets him. They are members of the same club, and Lucas is always hospitably inclined, Newbolde never loth to join him in the wine which he is continually ordering. As time goes on, Newbolde talks to his wife of Lucas, and sees no reason why they should not all be friends, since Lucas is very anxious to pay a visit to Sandwich, and does not care to renew his acquaintance with the place without being on good terms with the only people he cares

about in the world, who live there. In due time Lucas comes as a visitor to Newbolde's; and it is evident to everybody, except Newbolde himself, that his designs are not in the interest of Newbolde's peace.

"I think I detected from the first," said the vicar, "the wolf in sheep's clothing; and it seemed to me that, whenever an opportunity offered itself for the degradation of Newbolde in his wife's eyes, Lucas always availed himself of it. Whenever Lucas came to Sandwich, Newbolde was more or less under the influence of wine, so much so, that on more than one occasion I ran the risk of losing his friendship through lecturing him upon his weakness."

The vicar gave me many illustrative incidents of Newbolde's ineffectual struggles with the demon, Drink, together with instances of the remarkable affection that existed between himself and his eldest child, the boy; an affection that was really a mutual adoration so strong as almost to excite the jealousy of the mother.

Said the vicar, "The instinct of Newbolde's son—his name was George—though a mere boy, was active enough to make him resent every overture at friendship or familiarity on the part of Lucas. The boy

would neither play with him nor accept his 'tips;' very remarkable illustrations of a youthful antipathy, upon which the vicar dwelt with an almost fascinating interest. He described the boy's frolics with his father, his almost unnatural cuteness in cloaking the father's passion for drink, and gave pretty wayside instances of the boy's devotion to his sister, Maggie. One could see the domestic pictures which the vicar drew of himself playing with the children in that old-fashioned garden; Lucas, the Mephistopheles of the scenes, looking on; Mrs. Newbolde, ashamed of her husband, and making mental comparisons between the slovenly inebriate and the clever, cool, well-dressed gentleman from town, whom she had in those past days of her youth thrown over for this dissolute painter.

And thus the time wears on, the husband gradually falling under the dominion of the fiend Drink, the wife under the influence of the fiend Lucas. I might dwell upon the details of this phase of the story, as the vicar did; but I prefer to sketch the domestic history broadly and in few words.

Eight years have passed. Newbolde has gradually fallen from his position. The household is almost dependent upon the small income of the wife. With her respect for her husband love has gone also; with love and respect has departed pride in the house and

its management. What was once an artistic paradise has become a slovenly, ill-kept, ill-regulated abode. But, in the midst of all this, the wife has still retained her singular beauty, partly arising, no doubt, from a constitutional weakness of character in which vanity was predominant. The vicar soliloquizes somewhat upon this trait of feminine character—before coming to the *dénouement* of his story—which is, first, the elopement of Mrs. Newbolde with Lucas, and the scandal it creates throughout Sandwich; and secondly, the strange realization of the situation by the inordinate sensibility of young Newbolde, the son, aged eight, who is left under painful circumstances with his infant sister, aged six.

The vicar describes the interest he and his friends felt in these children, and presently mentions the sudden disappearance of the girl, who is carried away under somewhat mysterious circumstances, though in due course comes ample explanation that she is with her mother, who could not live without her. The boy's grief and manliness are touchingly described by the vicar, in contrast with the almost calm, unspeakable sadness of Newbolde himself, who sinks into the wretched state of a dipsomaniac, with lucid intervals, that illustrate in a grim sort of way his originally sympathetic and affectionate nature.

One day, near the bridge which crosses that attenuated arm of the sea previously referred to, he is found drowned, and there are attendant circumstances which point to foul play, and other attendant circumstances which cast, whether justly or not, a certain suspicion upon Lucas, strengthened by the fact that the little property of Mrs. Newbolde went to her husband on her marriage, to return to her should she ever become a widow.

“The influence of the father’s death upon the boy,” said the vicar, “was something terrible. The sister did not seem to realize the sad business. How could she at six? One might say, How could the boy, for that matter, seeing that he was only two years older? He saw the poor body carried into the desolate house, saw it all wet and weird—a dreadful spectacle. He leaned over it and kissed the poor dead lips; and he seemed to have grown old, the poor child, as he looked up at me, and cried, ‘He’s murdered! murdered! That man Lucas has murdered my father! And I will kill him!’ The little fellow raised his fist and shook it, and clenched his teeth as a man might. ‘God help you, my poor George!’ I said. ‘You must not say such dreadful things.’ ‘Oh, I must, vicar!’ the boy exclaimed, ‘and you should forgive me; I loved him so! That

man has killed my father, and you say in the pulpit a life for a life, and I will have his.' Misery had made the child prematurely old. I stooped down to comfort him, and flinging himself into my arms, he sobbed out, 'Oh, mother! mother! Maggie! Maggie! My heart is broken!'

The vicar turned his head away to hide his tears, and handed his snuff-box to me, that I might, I suppose, have an excuse to sneeze, which I did.

As I parted with his reverence late at night, to wander along the dark streets to my own lodging, it never once, in all my romantic reflections, occurred to me that it would be my fate to have my affections and fortunes bound up in the history of that "house to let" and its latest and most unhappy occupants.

## CHAPTER III.

## A MISSION OF VENGEANCE.

THE old house and the vicar's story kept me in Sandwich longer than I had intended to stay there, and excited in me an interest in the place, with which I hope the reader will sympathize sufficiently to accept this brief sketch of it. I particularly hope so, because I want both of us, reader and writer, to have in our minds the colour and atmosphere of the old times. Not that this story has to do with what is called history ; but as the vicar's narrative is the modern story of an old house, so does this general narrative run to a great extent into historic streets, though in due course it will carry us "over the sea and far away."

The completest contrast to the port of London, in all these English realms, is the old-world port of Sandwich. An odd little town, it has crept within the shadow of Progress and retired from business. Its quiet streets are haunted by a thousand ghosts of strange, busy days. Dickens's chronometer-maker

was not more outside the noisy track of customers than is the town and port of Sandwich, on the historic coast of Kent, great and famous in the glorious days of Shakespeare, Raleigh, and Drake. Of its antiquity, you may read in the British Museum the following unique charter granting part of its revenues to the monks of Christ Church:—

“Wherefore I, Cnut, by the grace of God, King of the English, and of the adjoining islands, take the crown from my head, and place it, with my own hands, upon the altar of Christ Church, in Canterbury, for the support of the said church; and I grant, thereto, for the sustenance of the monks, the port of Sandwich, and all the revenues of the haven on both sides, whomsoever the ground belongs to, from Pepernesse, on the east, to Mearsfleote, on the north, so far as a taper-axe can be thrown from a vessel at high water. The officers of Christ Church may receive all the profits, and no person to have any custom in the said port except the monks of Christ Church. Theirs to be the small boat and ferry of the haven, and the toll of all vessels whatever coming into the haven, to whomsoever they belong, and whencesoever they come. If there be anything in the sea, without the haven, which a man at the lowest ebb can reach with a sprit, it belongs

to the monks ; and whatever is found in this part of the mid-sea, and is brought to Sandwich, whether clothes, net, armour, iron, gold, or silver, a moiety shall be the monks', and the other part shall belong to the finders. If any writings shall hereafter appear, which, under a show of antiquity, shall seem in any way contrary to this our grant, let it be left to be eaten by mice, or rather let it be thrown into the fire and destroyed ; and let him who shall exhibit it, whoever he be, do penance in ashes, or be made a laughing-stock to all his neighbours. And let this our confirmation remain for ever valid ; and both by the authority of Almighty God and our own, and of our nobles who concur in this act, stand in full strength, like a pillar, firm and unshaken, against all the attacks of evil-minded people in succeeding times. But if any one swelled with pride, contrary to our wish, shall attempt to infringe or weaken this our grant, let him know that he is anathematized by God and His saints, unless he make due satisfaction for his crime before he dies. Written in the year of our Lord's incarnation, 1023. •

“I, Cnut, King of the English, confirm this writing inviolably.

“I, Alledmoth, Archbishop of Canterbury, confirm this prerogative with the Holy Banner.

“I, Alfrie, Archbishop of York, confirm this benevolence of the king with the sign of the cross.”

In addition to these signatures and attestations, the grant was signed by eight bishops, three dukes, and ten other persons. While this document demonstrates the importance of Sandwich in the days of Canute, there is a world of history between that time and the visit of Elizabeth in 1573.

Edward the Confessor made the city one of the principal Cinque Ports. He lived here in 1049, and superintended the fitting out of his great fleet to meet the invader, Godwin. The ships of Harold swam in the haven of Sandwich, and after the battle of Hastings William the Conqueror ordered certain records to be made in Domesday Book concerning the town, notably mentioning that “Sandwich pays the king the same service as Dover does, though not so great, and the inhabitants, before the king gave them new privileges, paid him £15 per annum, and when the archbishop received it they paid £40 and 40,000 herrings for the monks’ food, but in the year of the survey it yielded £50, and the herrings as before.”

In the reign of Henry IV., Louis, King of France, burned Sandwich, but it was afterwards rebuilt and united to the Crown in the year 1290,

the monks of Christ Church surrendering their rights and receiving in exchange a certain manor in Essex. When at war with France, Edward III. used to embark on his expeditions from this port, where the Black Prince landed in 1357, after the battle of Poitiers, with John, King of France, his son Philip, and other prisoners.

As I stood in the deserted city on the morning after the vicar's story, the ancient Cinque Port reminded me strangely of the grass-grown streets and decaying wharves of Nathaniel Hawthorn's native town as described in the "Scarlet Letter."

Though it is only sixty-eight miles from London, and some seven or eight from Ramsgate, and not exactly out of the highway of the world's business, the people in the streets stared at me curiously as I lounged here and there in contemplation of the sleepy old borough. Like Salem, Sandwich had been a bustling town, but had decayed and passed away, so far as its commercial and mercantile importance is concerned, though still boasting local authorities, whose power has come down to them from its palmy days. There is an old manse, too, in which the famous American would have delighted, and where he might have found inspiration.

But Sandwich has a record far older than Salem,

and it bristles with incidents of plunder, piracy, and war. In the autumn of 1457 Marshal de Brèze landed in the night, and having surprised the town, set it on fire, after slaying the mayor and the principal inhabitants.

Salem had not the questionable advantage of having European neighbours, or it might possibly have matched Sandwich in regard to warlike horrors. The town was no sooner partially restored than the Earl of Warwick pillaged it. Edward IV., however, restored the prosperity and dignity of the port. He walled it in and fortified it, and levied the cost in a duty on wool. In 1483 the harbour began to silt up, and to-day Sandwich stands in the midst of meadow-lands two miles from the sea-shore upon which it was originally built.

Sandwich has literally migrated. The men who knew it as a port and harbour, with ships of war and rich argosies floating in the offing, should they revisit "the glimpses of the moon," would seek it in vain. They would come ashore according to map and compass, and find meadow-lands covered with sheep; here and there an ancient homestead would delight the eye; if they came in the spring of the year, and cared for wild flowers, they would find "lady-smocks," "May-blobs," and "sweeps,"

flourishing on the banks of dykes and watercourses ; they would come upon an old highway where their ships had ridden at anchor, and they would find village groups drinking ale at wayside inns where they had embarked at docks and wharves. But no Sandwich would meet their eager gaze. They would see a narrow, sluggish river creeping from the sea through miles of daisy-dotted lands, velvety green. Inquiring their way in the direction of a square church tower in the distance, some two miles from the sea, they would find the remains of the lost city, right away in the country, on the banks of that creek-like river of salt and mud, which, with a stray brig or barque floating lazily on the tide, represents the only living reminiscences of the days when Sandwich was a famous port, where the Gauls found a commodious haven, and over against which the Romans erected fortifications, still partially extant, rising to view nowadays amid corn-fields and waving trees, instead of frowning over a busy shore fringed with gaily decked shipping.

One of the peculiarities of this migrated port and town is the water-supply. Not only has the sea left it stranded, but it has taken from the local springs all brackish flavour, and Nature coming to its aid, Sandwich rejoices in a freshwater river that runs in

and out of the old streets in the pleasantest fashion. It is always clear, fresh, and two or three feet in depth, and it constitutes the water-supply of the town. Now it runs along a street, by doorways and under bow-windows, skirting the side-walk, and rippling a constant song of delight. Here and there it pauses to supply a pump, or to answer the claims of buckets, brought down flights of steps connected with ancient houses. Then it will slip away under some old tunnel, to dash out again by green lawns and gardens, and to reappear in the quiet streets. The authorities of the town lead it hither and thither, confining it within stone walls, and tempting it through culverts. Once it pauses and swells out into a little pond for horses to drink at; but that is after its purer stream is locked up against the contamination of sea-water and the befoulment of a tanner who cleanses his skins in it, just before it joins that sluggish reminiscence of the sea which floated the Roman galleys, and tossed upon its bosom King Edward's famous lancers and stalwart British bowmen.

While, however, I tried to think of Salem and find contrasts with it in this decayed old port; while I tried to conjure up the figure of Hester Prynne in the strange old streets; and while I wondered if I

should ever see America and the scene of Hawthorne's story, the pitiful romance of "The House to Let" haunted me, and I longed for the hour of dinner to arrive; for the vicar had invited me to join his hospitable board again, and had promised to tell me something more of the Newbolde family.

The vicar's house was half-timbered, half-plastered, not unlike the buildings of Shakespeare's day. You approached it through a garden, half lawn, half flower-beds, and entered it by a hall paved with red brick, the walls wainscoted, and decorated with engravings of old cathedrals. Right and left there were doorways into a study on one hand, a dining-room on the other, a staircase and passage to the kitchens faced you. There was a mixed perfume of gilliflowers and beeswax in the air, and a seventeenth century clock in a black oak case measured out the hours with clerical decorum. It was a home of rest and peace.

"It is very good of you to come again," said the vicar as his stolid servant-man lifted the dish-covers, after a brief grace had been said by his master. "I have few visitors, and it is like a kindly messenger with news from the great world to have a Londoner at table."

"I don't think my news has interested you half

as much as your story of "The House to Let" has interested me," I answered; "indeed, I have spared you much of my conversation to listen to yours."

"In an out-of-the-way place such as this," said the vicar, "we concentrate our thoughts more upon one subject than you people do in town; one striking event serves us for a long time; one romance may last us a lifetime. In London your feelings are broken up among many romances, and your daily news is both varied and exciting; here the hours go by in a quiet, dull round; and when a serpent crawls across our path of peace we mark the trail of it for many a long year. When I am turning over the soil, or training the roses in the garden at the Manse, I often think of Eden and the solitude of that ancient paradise when its first occupants had left it."

"Is that the name of the old house where the Newboldes lived—the Manse?"

"Yes; I wish you could have seen it in the early days of their marriage. Newbolde's studio was a little heaven. It had a calm north light. The walls were all panelled oak. The carved fireplace was a puzzle of beauty even to the learned Associations that came to examine it. Mrs. Newbolde took a certain amount of pride in it on these occasions, for her husband always gave the *sarants* a luncheon in

the studio, and she liked admiration, poor thing. She would decorate the table with flowers, and sit at one end of it, George at the other, and receive all the compliments that were paid to her with undisguised delight. And Newbolde would pass the wine—and once in a way take a trifle too much—the children would come in at the close, and little George would climb his father's knee, and Margaret coo at him from the nurse's arms. Ah! it was a beautiful picture of domesticity, and with a background of art, that made it very delightful. But oh, woman, woman—frailty, thy name is woman!”

The vicar rose, opened a window at the back, which discovered a grass-plot, with a little stretch of that same gurgling brook I spoke of running through it. Two chairs and a table stood near by, with pipes and a tobacco-jar, and a small urn kept hot by a spirit-lamp.

“I think a glass of hot whisky and a pipe after dinner better than coffee and cigars, which is your town fashion. What say you?”

“That if you live quietly, and, as you say, prosaically, down here, outside the busy world, you know how to live, and I fully endorse this post-prandial siesta.”

“Good,” said the vicar, as he mixed the toddy

and handed me a clean churchwarden pipe. "Five years ago George Newbolde sat in that chair, a fine young fellow of three-and-twenty, but looking more than thirty. I have not seen or heard from him since. After his father's death, the furniture and effects of the old place were sold by auction, part of the money going to him, the rest to his mother, who was represented by a local lawyer, under the authority of her power of attorney. It was dated London. She was never seen by any friend after she went away; nor has anybody that I know, or that George knows, seen her since, or Lucas, or the little girl Margaret. George lived with me for nearly four years after the manse was broken up. I hoped to have kept him until now, though he had occasional outbreaks of restlessness, and he would go and wander about the old house in a strange way, setting his teeth, and repeating silently to himself his vows of vengeance, for I would never encourage him in his passion of wrath, though to comfort him I would quote his favourite author, to the effect that in due time this man Lucas should meet with a retributive justice,—

" ' Put we our quarrel to the will of Heaven,  
Who, when He sees the hours are ripe on earth,  
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.' "

“Furthermore, I endeavoured to press upon him the saying of a favourite book of mine : ‘ Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.’ But he grew up with a brooding spirit, and one morning, at the age of somewhere about sixteen, he left me. The night before was such a one as this—a June night, with a sunset that touched the brook, and bathed us both in golden light. I sat here smoking, and George sat where you are. He did not smoke, but he sipped a little toddy. I thought it good for him, and we talked together of many things. He had learned a great deal in a few years. It was my delight to teach him all I knew : a little Latin, some theology, which he did not take to with patience ; history, ancient and modern ; such philosophy as I thought a fair combination of New Testament teaching and moral ethics ; the poets, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope ; and a miscellaneous consideration of the natural sciences. He was apt, and we became companions ; but the shadow of his childish vow of vengeance lay continually between us. I tried to exorcise the fiend, but without avail. The evil spirit had possession of him, and grew with his strength. ‘ Ah ! forgive me, vicar,’ he said, one day, as we were crossing the bridge over the river where his father was found drowned ; ‘ but I did love him so dearly,

and her, my little sister, that I go about with a mission of justice, not vengeance—justice; and I pray that one day he and I may stand here together; and I somehow think that I would have strength enough to drag him here if I met him at the other end of the world. If I believe in a Supreme power, which I think and hope I do, He has appointed me to be His minister of justice in this cause, for He knows who poisoned the mind of my poor weak mother, He knows by whose hand my father fell and died.’ It was of no avail that I interposed my protest that Heaven had its own way of punishment for sinners, and that we could not influence its methods, and must not take the law into our own hands; he smiled defiantly, and his eyes flashed the determination that his unhinged mind had registered for itself. Poor lad! and he was but a lad, when he carried this burthen. A dark, black-eyed, tall, lithe young fellow, tall for his age, and strong for his age, and with a settled expression of melancholy in his face. And, as I say, one June morning he was gone, leaving behind him a letter full of gratitude and thanks, which I did not desire, for I loved the lad, and felt half his sorrow, and the expression of a hope that we should meet again. He did not write all that was in his heart, or he would have added, ‘I

go forth on my mission ;' and he has since told me that he had thought of telling me that his purpose was to go out into the world to hunt him down, the man who slew his father. I prayed for him earnestly, and in the little church where I officiate I put his name into the Church's appeal for those who are in trouble. A year after he left me I had letters from him, dated Vienna ; later I heard from him at Paris, St. Petersburg, Hong Kong, and then from New York and San Francisco. They were only short epistles, telling me that he was well, and hoping that I sometimes thought of him as he did of me. And one day, some seven years ago, he walked into my study at dinner-time, a bronzed and bearded man, scant of flesh, but wiry and strong, and with a grip of iron. 'God bless you, vicar,' he said, wringing my hand ; 'I am come to dinner.' 'God bless thee, George,' I said—and I would not have known him but for his voice—'thou art welcome !' But I fear I weary you."

"No, indeed you do not," I replied. "I begin to feel as if I had known your poor *protégé*."

"And as I sit holding your attention," said the vicar, "I feel something of the Ancient Mariner's persistence of narrative. But at least let me make you comfortable under the infliction. Another

glass ? Ten years old, this whisky has no headache in a bottle of it."

The fine old churchman laid down his pipe and mixed me another glass of toddy, and did the like for himself.

"What proofs had you that Newbolde, the artist, was murdered ?" I asked.

"No proofs ; but the certainty of instinct and circumstances. There was an ugly wound near the right temple, and suspicious marks on the throat. Against this was the theory that he had struck the abutment of the bridge as he fell, and that the discoloration of the throat might have been caused by the pressure of his neckerchief in a drunken fit, for the poor fellow had not been sober for a week. No proofs ; but suspicion of an emphatic character and the previous crime of breaking up a home, a sin not less in the eyes of Heaven and man than murder."

"True," I said ; "and deserving of as severe a punishment."

"Over dinner," went on the vicar, "George gave me some account of his wanderings. He had first gone to London ; had drifted hither and thither in the great city, looking in the faces of men for Lucas, frequenting haunts of vice, and also seeking

for him, as he said, in churches, ‘because,’ as he explained, ‘I thought he might have put on sheep’s clothing.’ He said he had also looked for his mother. ‘I thought she might go to the opera,’ he said, ‘as she loved dress and admiration, and I found myself gazing into the faces of young girls, thinking I might see Maggie, though I daresay I would not have known her if she had grown as tall as I had. But I never saw anybody like them. And I went to a theatre in the Strand and saw a play called *One Touch of Nature*, where a father was hunting for his child who had been stolen from him with her mother, and it so touched me when at last he found her that I made a fool of myself, and broke into sobs in the theatre.’ ”

“Poor fellow ! ” I exclaimed.

“Yes, yes ; what a noble disposition is overthrown in him,” said the vicar, “and what a capacity for happiness.”

“Does it not sometimes shake your faith in Heaven ? ” I asked, “when you see the worthy and the good oppressed with grief they have had no share in creating ? ”

“No ; for life is so short that the sufferings or joys of this world are but as shadows ; they are transient as the breeze that ruffles the bosom of the river ; it

is the future that we should live for. And, as Campbell hath it, paraphrasing the Word itself, ‘To bear is to conquer our fate.’”

“But, Mr. Vicar, what saith the Saviour Himself? ‘Whoso shall cause one of these little ones which believe in Me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea.’ Think of the stumbling, that thief, Lucas, caused to one child, perhaps to two; the suffering he planted in the breast of that boy in a childhood that otherwise might have blossomed into a happy manhood.

“It were to inquire too curiously into the might-have-been,” said the vicar, “to consider who of these three persons were most to blame for George Newbolde’s inheritance of sorrow—his father, who got drunk, his mother, who worshipped dress and vanity, or this Lucas, who traded on both to content his passion and his greed. When we set ourselves to allot blame and reward in this world, we undertake a task that even the angels might fail to accomplish. But let me finish my record. This poor fellow, George, with his mad—I had almost said murderous—mission, for he exclaimed as he left me that last time, ‘I will kill him! it is ordained that

I shall be his executioner'—this poor fellow, it seems, went from London to Paris, from Paris to Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg; to gaming-houses, theatres, operas, hotels; to Venice, Singapore, Hong Kong, thence to Japan, San Francisco, New York. When he had spent his money he became a cabman, steward on a ship, a sailor, a miner. 'Once,' he said, 'in Paris, I thought I had my man; I could have sworn it was he; I had driven him from a gaming-house, and was to take him to the Bois. At a likely spot I made him get out; he was an Englishman, and he threatened me; but I apologized, telling him I had a mission to capture an assassin, that I was a detective, and he overlooked my rudeness.'

"He had dreams, he said, that he would come upon him by mere accident in this way, and his chief trouble was how to get the man to Sandwich, to stand face to face with him on the bridge before he executed him.

"'This is madness, George,' I said to him; 'an affidavit from me, founded upon what you have said, might lock you up for life.'

"He looked at me strangely in response, and said,—

"Do you think I am mad? For I sometimes

think so. But,' he went on, without waiting for my reply, 'I know that I am not. Cowards would call my words those of a madman; but let them tackle me on any subject or at any work, and see if I am not as sane as they. Ask the boys at San Francisco who is strong enough to have his own way when he wants it; ask the P. & O. captain if one of his stewards did his duty when the purser's room was on fire; ask the Havre shipowner if the young chap before the mast of the schooner *Empress* was mad when he stuck to the ship and worked her into port when the French crew had deserted her; and ask Father Campanini, the Jesuit priest at Chicago, whether I did not do justice to your teaching in the controversy I had with him in one of the newspapers there. Oh, no, my dear master, I am not mad; nor am I any longer in a hurry; nor shall I ever more go rushing about the world for Lucas. I know that he lives; I have been twice on his track—twice—the last time in New York; I can wait, I can wait!' And, filling his glass full of neat whisky, he drank it off without wincing. That troubled me greatly, even more than his words did, and I told him so and reminded him that all our affliction—for I always counted myself in with him as a fellow-sufferer—had probably arisen from drink. "Ah,

vicar,' he said, 'you like poetry; so do I. Let me commend to you those lines of the old dramatist:—

““ Drink to-day, and drown all sorrow;  
You shall not do it to-morrow.  
But while you have it, use your breath;  
There is no drinking after death.””

“He might have quoted Scripture,” I could not help remarking, to the same effect; “eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die!”

“Yes, and the devil may quote Scripture, as Hamlet says, but we judge by deeds, not words; by acts, not by quotations. I rebuked George, kindly, of course, but he only laughed at me and drunk the more. And when the night was come he went out—I could not restrain him—and I followed. He went to the bridge, and stood there for some time looking into the river. Then he took the path the men took when they carried his father’s body home; and when he stood by the old house I laid my arm on his shoulder. He started, and cried out, and I said, ‘It is only I, George.’ ‘God bless you,’ he answered. ‘Do you remember when you lost that antique ring, and we looked everywhere for it? You said at last, let us repeat all we did that day, and go over the ground bit by bit, and haply we will come upon it where least we expect it. I am

here to profit by your lesson, and to strengthen my purpose. God bless you, vicar, and good-bye !' He gripped my hand as he spoke, and left me, hurrying away quickly towards the churchyard. I followed, but lost him, and on inquiry at the railway offices I found that the man I described had taken the mail train to London."

"And you have not seen him since?"

"No, nor heard from him."

"And do you know nothing of the man Lucas, and the woman and child?"

"Nothing."

"It is a sad story."

"It is indeed," said the vicar. "I pray to God it may be no worse."

As I wandered back to the old tavern where I was staying, I felt that the tragic story of George Newbolde had taken full possession of my mind. It was a summer night in "leafy June," and yet strange, chilly breezes came up the river from the sea. There was a moon, but it only shone now and then through chinks in a clouded sky. I went unconsciously a somewhat circuitous route to the hotel. Coming to the bridge where the vicar had last seen the painter's wretched son, and where that wretched son had seen his father's body taken from

the river, I stood there and listened to the water lapping the banks, and the wind sighing up the river. Then I walked past the ruined home, a bat whirring by me as I lingered at the doorway, and the cry of a night-bird saluting me overhead. I heard the ivy tapping at the blind windows, and felt all the desolation of the scene in my heart. As I turned away, the wind coming across the garden wafted the perfume of June roses into my face. It was like the faint memory of happy days. Perhaps, looking back, I put this interpretation upon it; for in those days I had not felt the happy anxieties of a first love; and this experience is filled with a fine collection of tender sentiments, with which we decorate the most prosaic incidents of life.

I do not believe in dreams, except in so far as they may sometimes interpret incidents past or to come, which our own actions, thoughts, and reflections have shaped. But when to-day I look back over the curious and romantic details of my own life, it seems more than strange that on the night of the vicar's story I should have dreamed that Fate had selected me as its chief instrument in an act of vengeance executed under the most unlikely, unlooked-for, and dramatic circumstances.

## Part II.

## CHAPTER I.

## AFTER THREE YEARS.

THINGS had gone wrong with me in many ways since that holiday visit I made to a corner of Kent.

What may not occur in three years? Look over your own record and think. It is only, as it were, the other day that I was sitting at the vicar's table, free, independent, happy. There were possibilities in the future that on reflection might cause me a little anxiety. I had no particular reason to reflect, and I did not.

But what a tangled path was before me!

Since I got into the train at Sandwich to go home to London, on that pleasant summer morning three years ago, I had been plucked at college, fallen in love, quarrelled with my family; and in a wild moment of despair I resolved to cross the seas and seek my fortune.

America had always had a special charm for me,

ever since the first novel I had read by Cooper, and recent new discoveries of gold and silver inspired me with hopes that were as glorious as they were quixotic. I had no practical knowledge of mining, but I was blessed with a strong constitution. I was born of an aristocratic family; but I had almost a religious respect for labour. I was well educated; though I failed to obtain a degree at Oxford. While I had some facility with my pen, I could also ride and shoot, and once I had mowed half an acre of heavy grass for a wager.

“In America,” I said, “there is no degradation in honest labour. A young fellow may be a carter one year and a congressman the next; he may be a dock-labourer to-day, and if he makes money to-morrow in the same city decent society does not say to him ‘Get out, you must not speak to us, you were a dock-labourer yesterday.’ I am strong, willing, not a fool, not quite penniless, and have I not you as a stimulus to exertion, you, my dear, dear Margaret?”

Yes, her name was Margaret Willoughby. She little knows how much I have suffered for her sake. But let me not say for her sake, seeing that there was underlying all I did the selfish desire of earning money enough to make her my wife. Uncivilized people would call it getting money enough to buy her.

So far as her father (he called himself her father) was concerned, he would not have quarrelled with the phrase—he was ready to sell her. As for me, had she been a slave in the market, and I a rich man, I would have bought her and set her free. Then when she possessed her liberty, I would have laid my life and fortune at her feet.

How strange is Destiny, Fate, the Future, or whatever it may be called. When I sat at the vicar's table and marvelled at his opening a trap-door in his dining-room to drop his wine-bottle into the river as a cooler; when I listened to his story of the old house; when I wandered about the deserted garden and looked over the wall at the tide slipping out to sea, I had never heard of nor seen my love; I was enjoying a vacation rendered necessary by over-study; and I had no idea that the year following would see me upon the ocean going forth "to seek my fortune" in a strange land.

Yet since then New York had seen me almost a waif and stray in her commercial quarters, seeking a clerkship; Brooklyn had cast me off as "a clever fellow," if I could only "find my vocation;" Washington had given me gentleman-like but profitless employment; St. Louis had made me the driver of a mule team; and Chicago had taught me to speculate

in corn and pork. For you must know that I carried from London a credit-note of two hundred and fifty pounds, and I swore to myself that should be my nest-egg. I vowed if I could not increase it rather than break into it I would starve.

And I nearly did starve in New York. I think it must be harder for a poor fellow to live in the Empire city than in London. It was fortunate for me that I discovered the free-lunch houses. I lived for three weeks on one "good square meal for ten cents" a day. But I stuck to my nest-egg. Brooklyn honoured me with a clerkship in a dry-goods store, but complimented me most on my knowledge of literature and London. St. Louis introduced me to a humble knowledge of the wool trade; and the great rival city of Chicago made a telegraph clerk of me. In three months I was promoted to quite a responsible position. The newspaper despatches passed through my hands. I had saved a hundred dollars. Two young fellows who had associations with the Board of Trade took me to the Exchange. I bought some hogs; on paper, of course. I made five hundred dollars. I wrote home to Margaret that I was indeed making my fortune at last. By the same mail I told my mother that I had at last discovered the highway to wealth; and that she

might look for me coming home, in a year or two at the most, a millionaire. For my two friends said my knowledge of European politics, which were at that time in a very troubled state (Europe seemed to be on the eve of war) gave me a tremendous advantage as a speculator in wheat and pork, two commodities that went up and down in the market to the tune of European probabilities and possibilities.

At the height of my success I fell into the lowest depths of loss and disaster. I was "broke," and so was my nest-egg. In my despair I had cashed my credit-note.

It was about this time that the fortunes of the "Revenge" silver-mine were much talked of in Chicago. I had read with great interest in some newspaper before I left England an account of the discovery of silver at Drummond's Gulch, and remember to have thought the massacre of Indians a piece of shocking barbarity; but the cablegrams had, it turned out, only given us half the story. I mention the affair in this place because a stranger in the Grand Pacific Hotel at Chicago recalled it to my memory in a curious and unexpected way, and also because my fortunes became mixed up with those of that wonderful region beyond the Rocky Mountains.

Drummond's Gulch is named after the man who

received it from the Indians. It is a simple story. Ten miners from California prospected this region. Not far from a picturesque bend of the Gunnison river they were surrounded by Piute Indians. Both sides fought desperately. The whites knew they must either conquer or die. They gave no quarter and expected none. All but one of them fell. Boss Drummond, whom they had elected captain, escaped, carrying with him a wounded comrade. Under cover of the night he brought his friend out of the fight into the Bush, in spite of his own desperate hurts. The Indians were too much mauled to go in search of Drummond, who succeeded in conveying his friend to a hunter's post on the river. Here they were both cared for; but only Drummond survived, and it was many days before he was fit to travel. His protectors were a small party of American trappers, who had in their company several friendly Indians of the Ute tribe, by whom he was eventually conveyed to the nearest white settlement. Here he succeeded in recruiting a new company of adventurous prospectors, who went forth not only in search of mineral treasures, but pledged to a bitter vengeance on the Piutes.

They succeeded in obtaining both. Almost at the scene of the first massacre they surprised an Indian

village. The work was short, sharp, and bloody. Amongst the trophies of their victory they found relics of the murdered whites. Drummond lost three of his men. The Indians, twenty in number, were killed to a man; the squaws and children were supplied with food and driven forth. A strong stockade was built and fortified, "a cemetery began" with the three dead whites, and a bonfire made of the village and its dead defenders, who were cremated among such household gods as the new comers did not care to annex.

A vein of coal was discovered near a creek of the river; galena lodes, carrying cerussite in limestone, were next found in abundance, and finally their investigations led to silver mining operations on a fairly large scale. Drummond and his friends exhausted their capital within twelve months, but secured considerable property rights, and were soon enabled to attract fresh capital and fresh hands.

Within two years the "Revenge" silver-mine at Drummond's Gulch was well-known as a great property, and the site of the Indian village was alive with the pioneers of a new world. A "preaching shop," bar-room, printing establishment, and general store, laid the foundation of a future city. It was indeed in its infancy when I arrived there

one evening in the fall, the only passenger by the first mail stage that had ever started thither from Kimballs, which was itself little better than a mining camp, twenty miles from Gunnison, that had just built its first schoolhouse.

How came I to go to Drummond's Gulch? you naturally ask. Well, it was in this wise. One evening, the very day I was "broke" at Chicago, I was sitting in the great hall of the great hotel there, wondering what I should do, when a stranger entered into conversation with me. He was a tall, dark, black-haired, bony fellow, rather pale, and he smoked the largest cigar I had ever seen. He had brown eyes, was clean-shaven, except for a greyish tuft of hair on his chin, and he wore jack-boots.

"You look kinder blue," he said.

"I cannot look bluer than I feel," I answered.

He handed me a cigar, and beckoned a darkey.

"Give the gentleman a light."

"Yes, sah."

The coloured attendant went to the counter, brought a match, lighted it on his breeches, handed it to me, and I blew a cloud after him as he shuffled over the marble floor.

"Poker?" asked the stranger.

"No," I said.

"Pork?"

"Yes."

"You look it."

"And wheat," I answered.

"So," he said, smoking. "I'd rather lose ten thousand dollars at poker, and have a good time, than win twenty at cornering pork; it's a mean business."

"It is," I said.

"Broke?" he asked.

"Yes," I said.

"Dead broke?"

"Dead," I answered.

Some fellows might have resented the inquisitiveness of the stranger. Not I. The most superficial observer can tell when a stranger means to be rude, and when he is sympathetic, when his questions are the result of mere curiosity, and when they are intended to be kindly.

"English?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Ah," he said, chewing his tremendous cigar, the fellow to which I chewed in friendly sympathy, for there was something generous in the man's manner, though he had a curious, uncouth, brigand-like appearance generally. "Come out here to make money?"

"To try."

"Can't do much that way in the old country?"

"Takes so long."

"Pork ain't no good for a boy?"

"No; I made money at first."

"Novices always do; I'd always back a grainger in his first hand."

"Would you?"

"And the greenest players first bluff. Are you a college chap?"

"Yes."

"Thought so; knew two of 'em at Tombstone; I trusted 'em, and they paid up like white men. Ever heard of Drummond Gulch?"

"I have."

"Go there—try silver. Pork disagrees with stronger financial digestions than yours. I like you. You are one of them Britishers who tell no lies when you are dead broke, and don't want to beg; stranger, I believe in you. My name is Manwaring Wilkess; I am a Tombstone City banker. I will give you a letter to Drummond, and I will lend you a thousand dollars to start you. Let's have a drink and say no more about it."

We did have a drink; we did say no more about it; and, with a thousand dollars in my pocket-book, the next day I started for the Rockies and Drummond's Gulch.

"You are just the chap for Drummond; what he wants is a secretary as will look after his affairs, and not let every loafer skin him when he's drunk."

"Oh, he gets drunk?" I said.

"As thunder; but don't you mind that. He's a bit of a crank when he's sober, and don't you mind that. When he's drunk he's either for cuddling a chap or shooting him; and he'll chuck his money away, or fight for other fellows' pocket-books at poker, like a Piute Indian after a wounded scalp. That's Boss Drummond to his boots, you bet!"

"I don't bet," I said.

"Oh, you don't," he replied. "What do you call cornering in pork?"

"Dealing in hogs," I said, smiling, for he had thrust a bundle of notes into my hand.

"You'll do," he said. "Hard money is better than profits in paper; silver licks pork; I've tried both. Give my love to Boss Drummond; tell him Manwaring Wilkess is your friend—good luck to you—and tell me how you get on."

And so we parted; he, as he said, for his "sweet a home as ever you see," at Tombstone City; I for the Rockies, and the scene of the last fight between the reds and whites at Drummond's Gulch.

## CHAPTER II.

I MAKE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE BOSS OF DRUMMOND'S GULCH.

"Do I know Manwaring G. Wilkess, youngster? Why, yes, I know 'Manny Wilks,' and that's the same fellow," said a bronzed athlete, in canvas trowsers and a red shirt, standing in the doorway of "The Castle," as the local bar-room was called.

"Here is a letter from him," I said.

"'Dick Drummond, the Boss of Drummond's Gulch,'" read the athlete, repeating the address on the envelope. "Yes, that's what they call me; that's my nickname."

"I met Mr. Wilkess at Chicago," I said, "and he was good enough to say that—"

"He is a friend of mine," interrupted the boss, as he opened my letter. "That is so, and if he wants me to prove it, he has only to say so. We are chums in a way, and like each other. He was one of the first in at Tombstone; I was the first here. That gives us a sympathetic affinity, as you would put it, being a scholar—"

While he was talking he was reading my letter.

"One of them college chaps, he says you are. Well, no matter whether it's true or a lie; you are welcome on this letter," he said.

"I was educated at Oxford, but couldn't take a degree," I said, "and I don't want to be considered a scholar, nor anything more than a labourer; I want to work and earn money."

"Make him your secretary—that's the idea," your introducer says," the boss replied. "What do I want with a secretary? But there, come in. Have some lunch? Is this your trunk?"

"Yes, I'll have some lunch," I said, "and that's my trunk."

"Here, Lady Ann," said the boss, to a middle-aged woman who was leaning on a shapely elbow that rested on a rough counter, "what can you do for my friend?"

"What can *you* do for him? is more to the point, I should say," she answered, without moving.

"I can pay for anything he wants and for all you can do for him," was the quick reply. "Can he sleep here?"

"No, he can't," she answered.

"Anyhow, you can give him some lunch, and I'll have some, too."

"Jim!" she screamed, still without moving; "lunch for the boss and his friend."

A negro appeared and laid a napkin upon a small table in a corner of the bar-room. Upon the napkin he placed glasses of ice-water (it is a very long way from civilization on the American continent where you cannot get ice), a dish of pickles, another of crackers, two pats of butter, some strips of corned beef, a box of sardines, and a piece of cheese.

"A bottle of wine," said the boss.

Lady Ann beckoned Jim, and pointed to a cupboard on her side of the counter. He opened it, took out a bottle of champagne, uncorked it, filled two glasses, and placed them before the boss and myself.

"Won't you honour us?" asked the boss, turning to the lady, and at the same time directing Jim to bring another glass.

"I'll put my lips to it," she said, languidly; "here we go."

As she raised the glass to her lips we lifted ours, and repeating her salutation, "here we go," all three of us tossed off the wine.

"His lordship out?" inquired the boss, inviting me in dumb-show to fall to.

"Gone to the hut with the whisky you ordered; it came by the stage."

Then without further remark, but in response to the sound of voices high in quarrel in an adjoining room, she disappeared.

"There's a pharo bank inside," said my host, "and she keeps the boys quiet. Lady Ann's the only woman in the Gulch. They call me the boss, but she is the boss."

"A fine woman, and has been beautiful," I said.

"Yes, quite celebrated, I believe, as a girl in New York, and was a Queen in her way among a certain set in Frisco," he said.

"You call her Lady Ann?" I remarked inquiringly.

"Her husband is Sir Thomas Montgomery—so the story goes—a real sweet little thing, as she sometimes says herself—a young English baronet, who was obliged to leave his own country within a year of coming into his title. It is quite a romance in its way; he is a mild, blonde, simpering youth, a good deal of a fool, but recites poetry like an angel, and writes it too, sometimes. We call him Sir Tommy, oftener Tummy, and he is quite a character in his way. She took a fancy to him at Frisco, and he to her; so much so, that he proposed to her and married her. The miners came in for miles to the wedding—right over the mountains from Greystone, over the

Lowland Pass, from Timberline, and I don't know where; and the fun was kept up for a week. Two funerals finished it, though the row was over poker, and had really nothing to do with the wedding. Manny Wilkess took an interest in the pair. It was through him they came here. They had ten thousand dollars, which they invested in Revenge Shares, and the only bar-room and gambling-saloon that we sanction here. Lady Ann has no rival; all the men worship her, and her word is law."

When her ladyship returned from quelling the disturbance, I took quiet opportunities to glance at her in a furtive, respectful way. She was, I should say, a woman of thirty-five, an oval face, olive complexion, dark wavy hair, a large mouth, blue eyes, a trifle bloated as to figure, a woman whose life was told in her face; a blighted flower, a handsome creature who had been born under a malignant star; a child of the gutter who, snatched out of vicious surroundings when young, might have been a brilliant woman of Society.

She was expensively dressed in grey silk decorated with crimson ribbons, her dark wavy hair bound close to her head. It was her clear blue eyes that impressed you at first sight of her; they were an incongruity, but a fascinating incongruity, taken

into account with her olive complexion and her black hair.

"They'll get to shooting," she said, as she leaned once more on the counter, "'Ugly Sam' and 'Bill Hicks,'" she said. "'Sam' had his iron out, and the other would ha' bin there right away if I hadn't gone in. I can't always be at their elbows."

"I wouldn't try," said the boss; "if they would only guarantee to kill each other outright when they begin I think we could spare them."

"I hate shooting," she answered.

"So do I, but it makes a change; gives the boys something to talk about," said the boss.

Then turning to me, he said, "You'll find the Gulch rather dull."

"Oh, I don't know that; you can make it lively sometimes, nobody more so."

"You think so, Lady Ann?" he said.

"I guess he's been telling all about me; I can draw *his* picture for you, mister," she said.

"Ah, you flatter me," he said, smiling; "but let me have another bottle first."

"Jim," called the hostess.

The darkey came, and the boss, raising his glass, said, "Here's to your ladyship."

"And 'here we go,'" cried she; but she refused

to drink more than one glass; "and you know I only take it out of politeness," she said, "just to sweeten the bottle, as my little Tommy says."

"Now for my picture!" said my host; "as our new comer must share the hut with me, at all events for a day or two, he may like to know what his host is like."

"Why don't you introduce him? I thought you Englishmen were all such hands at what Tommy calls ceremonial."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Ann," said my host, with somewhat of a sarcastic air. "Let me present to you—"

Here he thrust his hand into his pocket, and pulled out Wilkess's letter, and having looked into it, he continued,—

"Permit me the honour of presenting to you Mr. Hickory Maynard, a friend of our friend Manwaring G. Wilkess, Esq., of the Tombstone Solid Bank."

I rose and bowed.

"That will do, Mister Sarcasim; I only wanted to know his name."

"Hickory I am called by my friends," I said.

"Very well, then, Hickory, I don't envy you. Dick Drummond is the devil."

"Thank you," said Dick.

"More or less of a crank when he's sober, and he ain't full to-night; he's crazy outright when he's drunk. I ain't going to say a word afore his face that I wouldn't say behind his back."

"Go on, Lady Ann, you are always original," said the boss.

"And a truth-teller," she said.

"Yes, I will own it; though the truth should not always be told."

"Tell it and shame—"

"Me?" said Dick.

"And shame the old 'un,'" she went on. "Some men ought never to drink."

"Where would the 'Castle' be then?" asked Dick.

"Bust!" she exclaimed; "and a good job too. I don't want to stay in it. Sir Thomas and me could do without it, and would, only it gives him occupation, poor little chap; he'd go wrong if he was idle, and I'd go wrong if I didn't live among a crowd as wants keeping in good order and having an example set 'em."

"By Jove, it's true," said the boss; "but go on, tell Hickory what I'm like when I am a nice example."

"A fiend, a regular crank as nobody can do

anything with," she said. "It's a word and a blow with some boys, it's a blow and a word with you. Your pistol first, your remarks after ; that's you."

"I'm a brute, eh ?"

"Yes, a brute ; and yet you're mostly right. As I say to Tommy, he's a beast, but the others is generally in the wrong ; though I have heard some of the boys say they'd rather have him on the drunk than on the sober lay, when he sulks and has the blues, and goes prowling about like a bear with a sore head."

"A sore heart, Lady Ann," said the boss, "would be a better simile."

"Well, a sore heart if you like, and grinding his teeth, and walking miles on miles, and staring at the mountains, and looking like a man as has held two pairs, and been bluffed out of the pot by a broken vengeance. Tommy say's you've something awful—*hateful*, he says, bless his ignorance—on your mind."

"Tommy's right," he answered. "Out of the mouths of babes is the truth spoken."

"Indeed !" she said. "Tommy's no babe ; the Gulch hasn't put his courage to the test ; I guess whenever it does he'll be found all there, just as his ancestries was at Aggincourt, you bet."

"I believe it," said Dick, "though I am a brute with a blow and a word, and I know Tommy's a deuced sight braver than I am."

"I don't say that by a large majority," she answered.

"But I do."

"What! and the Gulch is called after you 'cause you won it with your blood, just as Tommy's ancestries did old England. Go on, boss, you can't drag compliments out of Lady Ann that fashion."

"*'Necesse est facere sumptum, qui quærit lucrum,'*" said Dick, surprising me by his burst into the classics not more than he surprised Lady Ann.

"Well?" she said. "Now, sir, he is getting ugly."

I looked at her inquiringly.

"He'll call for whisky next," she said, "and he'll not have it to-night."

Dick smiled grimly and emptied his glass.

"Well, give it a name. What's your Double Dutch mean? Sir Thomas is not here to tell me."

"I beg pardon, Maynard; a fellow who quotes Latin is a cad; I have always noticed it, but I have memories, and they break out into the words of a dear old scholar, who was my only friend."

"Don't mumble, or I shall go away. Now, hurry up, and translate that gibberish."

"It means that a fellow can't expect to win anything unless he stakes something. We pooled our lives in the Gulch and busted the Indian bank. That is my reply to your compliment, Lady Ann."

"Then why didn't you say so? Ah! here comes Sir Thomas; I hear him swearing in poetry at the ostler, 'Arry, as he calls him."

"Then we'll go home," said Dick, rising. "Charge the lunch, give my love to his lordship, send 'Arry up to the hut with Mr. Maynard's baggage; come on."

He took my arm, and we strode out together into the sunset.

"I believe you are in luck," he said, as we walked along the rough road. "I like you; perhaps that is good for you—it may be bad; but if you want money you are in the centre of the richest fields of gold, silver, copper, and coal in the world. You cannot begin to exaggerate its prospects. This Gulch, which is bursting with silver—yes, bulging with it—is but an atom in the general sum. And if I possessed all of it—if it were all coined into American eagles or English sovereigns, and packed here to be carted wherever I liked, I would give every coin of it for an interview of ten minutes with—"

### CHAPTER III.

#### FROM "THE CASTLE" TO "THE HUT."

"BUT let us talk of something else," he said, stopping short, as he was about to speak the name of some person whom he either loved or hated. "I must play the host better than that. Lady Ann said she pitied you, because she thinks I am a morose, gloomy, misanthropical wretch, half crazy when I'm sober, a fiend when I'm drunk. I will try and be on my good behaviour as long as you stay at the hut, at all events. One must not forget all one's good manners in the remembering of one's miseries, and when we are outside the pale of civilization, it is a duty we owe to ourselves to keep our humanity to the fore, eh?"

"The Hut" was Drummord's log cabin, one of the roomiest and best furnished in the Gulch. Situated a short distance up the mountain that overlooked Indian Valley, it was protected from the north wind by an overhanging ledge of rock, and it had an outlook to the south, where an arm of the Gunnison river wound round an island that looked like a living

poem set in gold and silver, so varied were the lights and shadows that fell upon the water, so dream-like the palms and shrubs that flourished on the land. The sun had gone down when we stood at the doorway, leaving a ruddy glow in the sky, which was presently mocked, in the darkness that shut in the hut from the north, by a cloud of fireflies.

An old negro met us at the door.

"Whisky and cigars, Wash!" said Dick.

"Yes, sah."

"And make up a bunk in the parlour for this gentleman."

"Yes, sah."

"I have three rooms here," said Dick. "This one, where I sleep and eat, the parlour, where I keep my books and things, and the kitchen, where Washington, my head cook and bottle-washer, has his turned-up bedstead. I am quite a swell, I can tell you, in the matter of a home. There is something of the pride that apes humility in calling it the 'Hut.' But when Lady Ann insisted upon calling her whisky-shop 'the Castle,' I had no alternative. For a log cabin, I think, when you see it, you will say it is not so bad."

And he showed it me at once, Wash having lighted the candles. The rooms were *en suite*, Dick's room,

the parlour, the kitchen, the parlour being set back, so that there was a passage-way past it from the kitchen into what might be called the general room.

There were a sheet-iron stove in the kitchen, with an oven and a hot-plate ; a table, two chairs, a roughly-made cabinet, which contained Wash's bed ; and on the walls were several dried hams, sausages, and bags containing corn, herbs, and other articles of diet ; and on some shelves quite a collection of tinned meats and bottled fruits.

"And here's a refrigerator," said Dick ; "got that luxury from Gunnison a month ago, and the stage brings us ice once a week."

The parlour was a small square room, with a few books on a set of pine-wood shelves ; a collection of Indian trophies of arms and skins ; a couple of English rifles, and two pairs of revolvers ; a map of San Francisco, and two pictures from the *Illustrated London News* and *Frank Leslie's Newspaper*, filling up one end of the room, except so far as the bunk or sofa upon which I was to sleep was concerned.

"And now let us try Sir Tommy's new tap ; it is supposed to be very fine."

He pointed to a wooden arm-chair near the stove, which was cold, the weather being warm, took one

himself, and we sat down. It was a cosy apartment, partly draped with curtains and skins, a great plaited straw mat on the floor, the walls being of planed planks nailed upon the logs, and giving an air of finish and comfort to the whole. Two great chests by the stove were covered with rugs and skins, and they looked like ottomans. In a small recess there was a bed, and by the side of it a table with a lamp upon it and a book.

"Ah, you see I read in bed when I can't sleep; sometimes I go down to the river; sometimes up the mountain. I have led a queer sort of life here. When I am a millionaire counted in English gold, I may leave it for another spell of travel. Oh, yes, I am a great traveller; I haven't lived here all my life."

Wash (this, as you see, is short for Washington, the name of Drummond's negro servant), gave us the whisky and cigars.

"That will do—only one glass to-night, no more. You can turn in."

"Tank you, sah," said Wash.

"Lady Ann spoke the truth, I do take too much now and then, but life is unbearable occasionally, and I must—can't help it; but to-night you can do the drinking and I'll do the smoking. And so you have come out here to make money? Well, as I

said before, you have come to the right place, perhaps to the right man. What can you do?"

"Ride, fish, keep accounts, shoot, telegraph, buy and sell dry goods, dig—"

"Well?"

"Write an essay, turn a Greek hexameter, take a hand at poker, join a corner in pork when I've money enough, speculate in fixtures, and come to grief."

"Good! And all for what?"

"To make money."

"You are what they would call a mercenary cuss, eh?"

"Yes."

"You don't look it."

"I am."

"What's it all about?"

"What do you mean?"

"This greed for gold. Is there a woman in it?"

"Well, yes, there is."

"Of course; one has only to look at you to come to that conclusion. What is she?"

"There are two."

"Two! Then, by Jove, you are lost. One is bad enough, but two—Heaven preserve you! for the old 'un cannot, against two of them."

"One is my mother," I said triumphantly.

"Humph!" he grunted.

"And the other, the lady I hope to marry."

"As bad as that, is it? Well, let us talk of something else. I had hopes of you; I thought you might have been badly treated, and that we could sympathize with each other, we two exiled Britishers; I hoped some woman might have got you into a scrape—debts you could not pay—or that some ruffian had come between you, and that you might be wanting money for the power it gives, to buy your way to vengeance, or, at all events, to best somebody, as they say. But you are only a good, honest, thrifty young fellow in love, who has come out here to find the money to buy a nest with. Well, that's all right; but, there, you see, I am a bit of a crank. What can I do for you?"

"I don't know. I feel sometimes as if nobody could help me, feel like going home again and giving up the struggle. Ah! Mr. Drummond, you do not know what a fight I have had."

"Don't call me Mister," he said.

"My trouble is not as prosaic as you think, nor my hopes so simple as you imagine. There is a ruffian standing between me and my dearest ambition; that is, if I dare call her father a ruffian.

Indeed, my path is full of obstacles ; my own flesh and blood are against me."

"That is no new thing in men's troubles," he said.

"But I have been inhospitable in my remarks. Cheer up ; tell me all about yourself. Can you trust me ?"

"Yes, indeed I can," I said.

"My lad, you may ; I never wronged man or woman, and I carry about with me a load of sorrow, and have in my heart and brain a mission of vengeance that would have broken up most men. You may trust me."

He took out of a sheath that lay on the window-seat a knife that he had laid aside with his belt as we came in.

"There is a knife for the man it is my destiny to meet and to kill ; but you are not he, my friend ; here is my hand for you. I like you, and you are Manny Wilkess's friend. He lent me a pile of money to keep the biggest share of the Revenge mine in my own hands, lent it without security ; he is always doing that kind of thing, and has never lost a penny of it ; and I owe it to him to be kind to you ; that is all I owe him at the moment, for I've paid him back that loan, and deposited in his hands over a million dollars. Yes, I have made money very fast of late, and one day, if I cared to realize my stock, and

—but, there ! I don't want to talk about myself ! let us talk about you."

He filled his glass twice while he was talking.

"You heard me say only one to old Wash, but he's a nervous old chap, and loves me like a dog, and I do get drunk now and then, that's a truth, but not on two or three glasses ; don't be afraid. Now, Hickory, tell me all about yourself. How can I tell what I can do for you if you don't ? "

"But you pulled me up so stiffly about women that I feel embarrassed."

"Oh, you needn't be."

"You feel no interest in any woman ? "

"Yes, I do, in one ; she *is* a woman now if she be living, though I only knew her as a child."

"Indeed ! "

"As a child ; she was my sister."

"Then I envy you ; I have no sister, but I have one of the best mothers in the world."

"And I envy you," he exclaimed, rising from his seat, "for if my mother stood before me I would strike her dead ! "

"No, no ; don't say that," I replied.

"Well, well," he said, sitting down again and lighting a fresh cigar, "don't let us talk of me or mine. I took to you the first minute I saw you ;

and something tells me that it will be good for you, for both of us, that we should open out our histories to each other, honestly and true—who we are, what we do here, why we came, what are our objects in life—like two men who are going to be partners, eh? What do you say to that?"

"I am quite willing," I said.

"Then you shall begin. Fire away. To-night I am in the humour; to-morrow things may be different. Anyhow, count me your friend. One day I may want a partner, an ally, a comrade—more than all, a friend."

"I came to America to make my fortune, as I have already said."

"And, you will, I feel sure."

"That I may marry the girl to whom I am engaged."

"Of course."

"I am that unfortunate young man, the younger son of an aristocratic family. My father was a spendthrift. He left his estates heavily mortgaged. My eldest brother was a true Maynard; he followed in his father's footsteps. He helped his brothers as well as he could, but he could not do much more than find them openings in the Government service. The youngest of six, I had but little chance, you

may be sure, though somehow, money enough was begged or borrowed to send me to Oxford. My mother, bless her heart, had some hopes of me, but she was very fond of me, and is now. Her love blinded her to my demerits. I had no head for academic learning. I was plucked, and snubbed by everybody in consequence, except her. She has a small income settled upon her in such a way that she cannot part with it, and she lives on it with an old, trusty servant in Doughty Street, Mecklenburgh Square, London. I parted with her there eighteen months ago for two years, hoping to return a rich man."

"Did you hear Lady Ann call us the wolf and the lamb?"

"No."

"She did. She is a woman of observation, but there was more of the lion than the lamb in that promise of yours. Well?"

"You see, I was in love, and it's astonishing what courage being in love gives to a young fellow."

"Yes, I suppose it does," he answered, looking at me in a curious, puzzled way.

"She's the most delightful creature in the world; true as steel, good as gold—"

"Hold hard, Ned," he exclaimed; "all women are that until you find them out. Go on with your story, but don't trouble to throw in testimonials as to character."

"One would think you had been in love yourself, and had had a disappointment."

"I was in love when I was a lad, a lad of about ten."

"With your sister?" I asked, smiling.

"Yes, with my sister," he said. "She was several years younger than me. But, there, go ahead. I'll try and like that young lady of yours because I like you. What's her name? There! see what an interest I am taking in her."

"Margaret Willoughby," I answered.

He repeated the name, turning it over, as it were, reflectively on his tongue.

"She is an actress—against her will, though. Her father is a bad lot, I'm afraid."

"Margaret Willoughby," said my host. "Yes, it is rather a pretty name."

"You see, when I was plucked, I went to London and lived with my mother; but I insisted on doing something for a living, and, indeed, it was necessary that I should do so. But my brothers cut me because I took a clerkship in a merchant's office. I

was not going to be a burthen upon my mother. One of my brothers is in the Guards, another in the diplomatic service, a third was secretary of Legation. They all managed to get on pretty well. I earned two pounds a week in the city; and through a friend who was on the Press I used to go to the theatres a good deal. One night at the Adelphi I fell in love. She was not a star. She only played a third-rate part, but I saw nobody else when she was on the stage, and wanted to see nobody else when she was off. She was a pretty, grey-eyed, gentle creature. I went home and thought of her all night. It seemed as if I ought to pity her, though why I could not tell, unless it was that I associated her with the part she played. She was persecuted in the drama, and she suffered so sweetly that I had her troubles, I suppose, in my mind."

"She was only acting, lad," said Dick Drummond, interrupting me. "They are always at it. My mother was one of the loveliest women in the world, a voice so soft that you would have thought her an angel—but, there! what the deuce am I talking about? Go on, don't mind me. It doesn't matter. I can bear it. I've been in training long enough, young as I am. Talk about the patience of Job—but, there, keep it up, Hickory, keep it up."

By this time my host was drinking hard, though he continued to watch me and to listen to me with unabated interest.

"I went to the theatre the next night again."

"Of course you did; just the thing you would do."

"And the following night also," I continued. "Then my Press friend took me to a tavern after the play and introduced me to one of the actors, who said I had better be careful, for the young lady was a modest, good girl, respected by the company; that she had a wretch of a father. The man came in while we were talking, and I was introduced to him. A tall, spare, middle-aged person, somewhat showily dressed, a trifle shabby, but with several diamond rings on his fingers. Fitzherbert Willoughby, they called him. He did not impress me favourably, but I made myself as agreeable to him as I could. I paid for his supper, and also for hot brandy and water, afterwards. He talked to me about my family, professed to know my elder brothers, and hoped for the pleasure of meeting me again. He generally, he said, came to the 'Crown' tavern after seeing his little girl home from the Adelphi. My heart beat quickly when he referred to Miss Willoughby, and I said I usually

looked in at the 'Crown' in an evening, though, to speak the truth, that was the first time I had ever been in the place."

"The moment a fellow is in love, as he calls it," said Dick, "he becomes a liar, it seems. But that is human nature, I suppose. Go on, old fellow."

"We met at the 'Crown' many times before I ventured to tell Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby how much I admired his daughter. He was not in the least offended. He praised her, and said she was his only solace since his wife's death. They had once been, he said, in flourishing circumstances, and had spent several years in foreign travel. His wife had died abroad. Their daughter was fond of artistic life, and wished to go on the stage; he supposed she sought in that occupation occasional forgetfulness of her mother, to whom she was devoted. Encouraged by the kind and familiar way in which he talked of her to me, I told him how much I should esteem the pleasure of meeting her. He invited me to come home and sup some night after the theatre. She generally had supper alone, he said; but as I had honoured them by taking an interest in her career, we would go home together one night and have a snack at his chambers. The night came at last."

"Yes, it always does," my host remarked, leaning back in his chair and blowing a cloud of tobacco smoke up into the oil lamp that hung from a beam in the roof above us, "it always does—only a question of time and patience."

## CHAPTER IV.

## I WISH MYSELF BACK AT CHICAGO.

THE next day the boss of Drummond's Gulch may be said to have begun his "bender," as a bout of drunken dissipation was called in these regions.

We breakfasted at six in the morning. He drank whisky; I coffee. He ate crackers; I did ample justice to the fried ham and poached eggs which poor old Wash cooked and served deliciously.

"Don't mind me," said my host; "I am not eating this morning, Wash will take care of you; I can't eat and drink at the same time."

"Soda water in der frigerator, Massa Drummond," said the negro.

"Let it stop there."

"Yes, sah."

It was a glorious morning. The door of the hut was wide open. The sun came streaming in. Whisky seemed quite an anomaly in such a scene. And the coffee was delicious.

"I roast it on de stove, sah, and grind it fresh."

“Have tried to make the hut bearable, you see—and Wash helps me all he can; don’t you, Wash, you black nigger!”

“Yes, sah,” answered Wash; “but I’s no black nigger, sah. I’s best cook dis side de Rockies.”

“Get out!” growled my host, “you conceited old fool.”

“Yes, sah,” said Wash, scuttling away into the kitchen, and turning round as he left the room to beckon aside to me.

Dick Drummond lighted a cigar and went into the open air. Wash returned to me.

“Be careful ob him, sah, don’t contradict de massa when de whisky’s aboard—good, kind massa ’cept when he’s full—deal trouble on his mind, Massa Drummond—forget himself sometimes—coax him as you would a kicking mule dem times, sah—”

“What the deuce are you mumbling about there, eh?” Dick exclaimed, coming back. “Get out, you imp of darkness, or I’ll let daylight into your misbegotten carcase!”

Wash dodged as if he feared a blow, and I saw him no more until night.

“Let us go into the camp, and see what’s going on,” said my host.

We went.

It took the sun all its time to glorify Drummond's Gulch in these days—only a few years ago, though I am told it now bids fair to be as gay and bright a city as Denver itself. If, as I hear, Gunnison now boasts two daily newspapers, I see no reason why the Indian Valley should not have blossomed out of the dust and ashes of a mining camp into banks, churches, newspaper offices, theatres, and “elegant houses.” I know that Denver rejoices in one of the most beautiful opera-houses in the world. And what was Denver?

But our business is with Drummond's Gulch, the beginning of a city; with the budding civilization of an Indian valley in the mighty heart of the Rocky Mountains. And to think that this reckless drunken Englishman at my side should have sown the seed of a city that is to spread far and wide, rivalling Leadville, Denver, perhaps Pittsburg.

A ploughed field, broken into furrows, is not always a delightful picture; yet later when the green wheat is in bloom, and the red poppies gleam amidst the emerald wealth of it, how splendid it is! Then is the summer of its days. The honeysuckle perfumes the adjacent hedgerow. The wild rose decorates it. The lark sings high up in the heavens, and all the world looks happy. Later the dark,

uninteresting furrows torn up by the plough have produced the golden grain. The voices of the harvesters are heard and the whetting of the sickle. The larks have reared their families, and by-and-by the song of the "Harvest Home" awakens the neighbouring echoes.

So this valley of Drummond's Gulch shall change and be lovely once more, not with foliage and birds, but with human love and sorrow (for both are close together), and with the thankfulness of well-paid labour. The scars you see on the hills, the rended trees, the broken up rocks, the torn land, the burnt forest, the bruised and blackened logs, the pathway thick with dust; these are the furrows of the miner's plough, these are the channels of seed, these are the rough preparations of the city that is to be. And when the sheriff, the schoolmaster, the parson, and the newspaper man shall take full possession, and the laugh of happy childhood shall be heard in the well-tended streets, then shall the rough pioneers move on, going further West.

Providence is no respecter of persons. The wildest and most reckless of His creatures are His instruments in founding the great frontier cities. Gamblers, thieves, disappointed lovers, broken-down traders, deserters from the army, unhappy sons of

wretched fathers, waifs and strays of cities, outcasts, murderers, crews as ragged in their morals as in their clothes, have dug the furrows and sown the seeds of New Colorado, and planted civilized posts along the picturesque Santa Fe Trail.

It must have struck many a thoughtful man who has been mixed up with the beginnings of these American cities, that there is more of good than bad in human nature. The just, if rough, administration of many a mining camp, would shame the more pretentious governments of established cities, and professedly moral communities.

What a strange, wild, unkempt crowd it was that constituted the population of Drummond's Gulch. Hard-looking, sun-burnt men, with long hair; bearded Herculeses in sombrero hats, gaunt cowboys from an adjacent ranche; all of them with their trousers tucked into their long boots, and knives and pistols thrust into leather belts that girded their waists; one of them (a new comer I was told) wore a great diamond pin, and another a gold watch-chain thick enough to stall an ox with.

A great company of them were at "The Castle" when we entered it. They made way for us in a surly kind of fashion. Lady Ann nodded familiarly to us. She and Jim and his lordship were busy at

the bar, serving out whisky. All the men seemed to be talking at once, except when they paused for a new act related by one of their number who had brought the news of a great find of silver west of the Elk Mountains.

"Who is fool enough to listen to Ugly Sam?" asked Drummond, stepping up to the bar and ordering "whisky, two glasses."

"A heap of us," said a young fellow at my elbow, "and a heap of us won't be sorry to move out of this hole!"

"Indeed," said Drummond, eyeing him with a wicked look, "like the dog that scents a boot, eh?"

"What do you mean, Drummond?" demanded the other.

"What I say, curse you!" exclaimed Dick, turning angrily upon him.

Lady Ann was between them before another word was spoken. She had slipped round the counter and elbowed her way through the throng on the first word Drummond had uttered.

"Now I won't have it!" she exclaimed, "if you've got any extra strength to spare, Dick Drummond, go and take a pick and have a high old time in the Revenge; you shan't do it here!"

"Shan't!" he repeated doggedly.

"No, nor you either, Tinker Bill ; I have sworn that if there is another row in this shanty, before the month is out, I quit ! So there !"

"Then quit and be hanged to you !" exclaimed Dick.

"No, no," shouted the company as one man, and as one man the crowd drew its weapons.

"Look here," said a grey-headed man, with a solemn face, "look here, Boss Drummond, I am your oldest friend, we all kinder admire you and look up to you, except when you are on the tear. And then, by thunder ! we hate and fear you, and pity you."

"Curse you, don't pity me—hate me if you like ; but don't pity me. And if any six of you like to come outside and shoot—"

A sudden movement in the crowd was checked by Lady Ann putting her hand over Dick's mouth.

"Don't mind him, boys ; you know he'll be right down sorry for it when he's sober," she said. "Mister Schwartz, with the diamond in his shirt, has ordered a basket of wine in the saloon ; now if you love Tommy and me, and want us not to pull stakes and move off, go into the saloon ; and Sir Thomas shall pitch you a recitation. There ! Won't you, Tommy ?"

"Yes, I will truly," said a womanish voice, the

voice of an aristocratic scapegrace, the scion of a noble race, the tenth baronet of a distinguished family.

A weak-headed, free-handed, foolish young man, Sir Thomas Montgomery, had drunk and gambled away both means and reputation in England, and had drifted through several fits of delirium tremens into the region of the Rocky Mountains; first on board an ocean steamer, secondly, in a private car bound to the west; and thirdly, by way of a happy speculation in San Francisco. Here a wealthy gentleman who knew his family met him and gave him a handful of mining stock that saved him from the gutter; and then he fell into the dirty, but kindly hands of the lady who nursed him, cured him, and married him, and became a lady of title.

Below the medium height, he had fair hair, parted down the middle, bluish, saddened-looking eyes, a fair beard, a weak mouth, and a slight lisp.

Dick Drummond leaned over the bar, drank whisky, and watched Sir Thomas, in a languid way, while that dapper young victim of dissipation was lifted upon a table in the gambling-saloon (the door opened upon the bar and gave us a full view of the interior), and began to spout, in a by no means

unmusical voice, "The Wreck of the schooner *Hesperus*."

"This is your doing," said Lady Ann in an angry whisper; "he was on for a spell of good behaviour until you came."

"I am very sorry," I said.

"What do you want here, anyhow?" she asked.

"No more than that which the others want—work," I said.

"Then go to the new ground they're talking of; we don't want you here," she said.

"Why not?" asked my host, looking up, "why not, my Lady Trumpery?"

"Don't call me names, Dick Drummond," she replied, "or I may forget myself."

"Nothing new in that, eh?" he said, with a mocking laugh.

"Coward!" she said, still in a whisper, "and brute; I've saved your life many a time."

Then turning to me, she said, "He would have been murdered in his bunk a month ago if it hadn't been for me. And that's what it will come to sooner or later if he don't turn up the drink. All the better for me if he's left me fifty thousand dollars of stock in the *Revenge* as he says. But I pity him for what he's gone through, poor wretch; he used to

tell me and Tommy when first we came about his miserable life ; but we struck the Gulch when he'd a sober fit on him."

Drummond suddenly pulled himself together, and stalked out into the road.

"Have you any influence with him?" she asked ; "you seem a poor creature ; why don't you lay hold on him if you're his friend, take his shooting-irons out of his pocket, and get him back to the hut, where he can blow off his gas at Washington ? D'ye hear?"

I began to wish myself back in Chicago. Being cornered in pork was better than being knifed or pistolled in Drummond's Gulch. I went bravely up to my host nevertheless. He was standing in the road rocking himself to and fro in an irresolute drunken way.

"You've soon forgotten your friend," I said, assuming a defiant and angry manner. "I'll go back to the hut and pack."

"Pack?" he said, "what do you mean. Going to leave me—think I'm drunk?"

"No, not at all, I think you are inhospitable ; I want my dinner."

"Wash 'll give you some," he said.

"Not alone, I won't go without you—come along."

I took his arm, and he moved forward as I stepped out.

"Come along?" he said, smiling in a surprised and half-amused way.

"Yes, come along," I said, and dragged at him.

"Hickory," he said.

"Yes?"

"You're the fellow Nanny Wilkess sent to me?"

"Yes, come along," I replied.

"Yes, come along," he said, echoing me; "that's just like her, come along; I can hear her little voice now, God help her!"

Then he relapsed into silence, but kept up with me step for step.

"Plenty to do in the Revenge, she said, eh?" he remarked, as we passed the gorge where the trucks from the mine could be seen, "and they think I called it that because we got even with the Indians there!"

Then he laughed aloud and pulled me up. We both stood still.

"Come along," I said, again dragging at his arm.

"Did you say you were hungry?"

"Yes."

"Are you living with me?"

"For a day or two," I said; "come along."

Again he echoed me.

"Come along. Yes, I will. Am I drunk?"

"You were."

"Not now, eh? Can't afford to get drunk."

By this time we were once more at the door of the hut. The old negro was sitting on a log in the sunshine.

"How long have I been drunk, Wash?"

"Two weeks," said Wash promptly, and making signs at me.

"Bring the bucket, you black son of Satan."

"Yes, sah," said Wash, moving the log on which he was sitting away from the door.

My host sat upon the log. The old negro brought a bucket of water and poured it over him. Drummond shook himself, closed his eyes, and waited for the operation to be repeated three times.

Wash then helped him to strip and dry himself with a rough towel, and brought clean dry clothes. My host rehabilitated himself as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Wash disappeared for a few minutes, and then returned, saying,—

"Soup ready, massa!"

"Come along," said my host, leading the way into the hut.

"Will massa's friend have soup?"

"Yes, thank you," I said.

Drummond sat down before a bowl of rich tomato soup and drank it, not as if he relished it, but as if he were performing a solemn duty.

When he had finished, he said,—

"Two weeks—three would make me as big a fool as Tommy Montgomery."

"Dat's so," said Wash, "tank de Lord, massa's hisself again."

"I ask your pardon, Hickory Maynard," said my host, "but it's a sort of disease with me."

Talking with Wash later in the evening, I found, as I expected, that his "two weeks" was a sudden happy thought.

"It came to me to say it as if it was de Lord's blessed truth," he said; "and it's one ob dem sins dat de angel blottis out; isn't dat so?"

I told him it was, of a certainty.

"Come and have a swim before dinner," said Drummond, "it will do us both good, eh?"

I assented. We scrambled down to the river, dived and swam and scrambled back again, by which time my host was the same kindly, if eccentric, person who had received me into his trim and comfortable hut the day before.

After dinner, when he had lighted his cigar, and passed the whisky to me, he said,—

“Then it’s two weeks ago since you told me all about that thief and his daughter, eh? Seems to me as if it were last night. But drink is madness. The poor wretch in the play was right when he called it putting an enemy into your mouth to steal away your brains. But I inherit this vice, as you swells belonging to swell families inherit the gout.”

He reached out his hand for the bottle; I delayed passing it.

“Don’t be afraid. I’ve had my bender, as they say. Don’t fear for me. One glass after dinner, one before going to bed, no more for a month. It is all right.”

I passed the bottle.

“If you are to be my partner, we must understand each other. Finish that yarn of yours. Do you think I forget it? Am I likely to? You are the first fellow I have talked to about my sister since I was last in England; but go ahead, I know where you were; you said the night came at last, and I said it always does, but it’s the waiting for it that breaks a fellow’s heart!”

## CHAPTER V.

BUT A GREAT CHANGE COMES OVER "THE HUT,"

AND I AM GLAD I LEFT CHICAGO.

I CONTINUED the history of my life and troubles, my love and sorrow, my disappointment, my hopes, my ambition. For a long time my host did not interrupt me. He watched me with flattering interest, now and then nodding his head with approval, now and then leaving his seat and taking a turn about the room.

"She was more beautiful off the stage than on," I said, "but not much more cheerful. Somehow I found myself pitying her at home just as much as I pitied her in the play. Her smile was sweet but melancholy. She did not speak of the stage as if she liked it."

"Where did she live?" he asked, as if he were putting the question to himself, and speaking in an absorbed way.

"She lived with her father in a suite of chambers in Buckingham Street, Strand."

“Buckingham Street?” he said, thoughtfully; “don’t know it. But go ahead, I am interrupting you.”

“I was about to refer to the night when her father invited me home to supper.”

“Yes,” he said, “I remember! Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby—a swell name.”

“Very,” I replied.

“His own, of course?”

“Oh, yes.”

“Margaret Willoughby,” he said, turning the name over, as it were, in his mind. “Yes, it’s a pretty name.”

He was talking to himself. I paused. He passed the bottle.

“Thought you were waiting for a drink,” he said. “Well, you went home with him and her to supper; yes—”

“It was a good supper,” I continued, “well served, and almost luxurious. She presided over it like a queen in disguise. It occurred to me afterwards that she was also like a queen in captivity. She seemed resigned, but it was as if she were acting the part of a contentment she did not feel. After supper we had a hand at cards.”

“Did you not talk over supper?”

“ Yes.”

“ What about ? ”

“ Acting chiefly, I think.”

“ Not about when she was a child, and the countries they had seen in their travels ? ”

“ No.”

“ Not about Mr. Willoughby’s adventures, nor anything of that kind ? ”

“ No, only commonplace talk—if I may call any conversation commonplace in which she took part. He said a game at cards was a soothing thing at night—just a quiet game. Miss Willoughby declined to play at first, but I hoped she would, I said, and after some hesitation she did. In a little while, however, he said it was time she went to bed, as she had a rehearsal in the morning. I bade her good-night. ‘ Just one rubber, double dummy,’ he said, when she had gone, and the room was to me a blank, except for the pleasant memory she had left behind. When I went home I found that I had lost thirty shillings. I called the next day formally, and left cards on father and daughter. I was madly in love. In less than a week after first speaking to her I found an opportunity to see her alone. She seemed glad I had called, and not sorry her father was out. It was not my vanity that led me to think so ; love has

keen eyes. In my case it was bold, too. I confessed how devotedly I loved her, and asked her permission to propose for her to her father. I told her who I was, and said my mother should call upon her. She made no reply, but allowed her hand to rest quietly in mine, and when I asked for her answer there were tears in her eyes, and I kissed her."

"Quite right," said my host, not jestingly, but in an odd, serious kind of way.

"And so we were engaged," I continued; "but she asked me not to tell her father."

"Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby?" he remarked, interrogatively, and sipping his whisky.

"Yes," I said.

"I'd like to see that gentleman," he said, emptying his glass. "I kinder hated him at the start; he's a 'bad potato,' as our friend Wilkess would say. Well, youngster, go on; don't mind me; I am taking in every word you say."

"It troubled me when she asked me not to tell her father of our engagement," I said, continuing my story, "and I wondered at it all the more that I had no secrets from my mother."

"Never mind your mother," he said. "I don't care much to hear a fellow talk about his mother; stick to the girl."

"I am sticking to her," I said, smiling, "and mean to. But I can't keep my mother out of my story, and I wouldn't if I could. She is the best mother in the world."

"She may easily be that," he said, with a cynical laugh. "Well?"

"I told my mother all that had passed," I continued, "including our engagement and my determination to marry Margaret Willoughby. I asked my mother to call on her; she refused."

"Yes, of course," commented my host.

"She said she would never consent to my marriage with an actress. But I induced her to go to the theatre. After that you may be sure I persuaded her to go a step further."

"But she did not," said my host to himself.

"Yes, she did," I answered.

"Well, go ahead; don't mind what I say. I'm not much of an authority, perhaps, on mothers."

"My mother called on Miss Willoughby," I continued, "and then I suppose my friend of the tavern began to realize that I was indeed serious in my admiration of his daughter. I learnt afterwards that he went round and made inquiries into my financial condition and prospects. One day he met me as I was going home from the city. He invited

me to have a few minutes' chat, and took me into an obscure bar. There, in a fierce whisper, he asked me what I meant in regard to his daughter. I said I should like his permission to marry her when I could afford to set up housekeeping. He said I had his permission to go and hang myself. He knew the sort of loafer I was—one of those needy swells who married actresses and lived upon their earnings. I told him that if he were not her father I would make him apologize on his knees. He said if I dared to enter his rooms again—

“And you didn't shoot him!” exclaimed my host.

“We don't carry pistols in London; and he was her father—at least, I thought so then.”

“And was he not?” asked my host, pushing his glass aside, and opening his eyes wide.

“No.”

“Not her father! What relation, then?”

“Her step-father, I suppose.”

“Suppose!” he said, repeating my words excitedly; “suppose!”

“Yes.”

“Don't you know?”

“I don't.”

“What of her mother?”

“Dead. I told you so at the outset.”

"Very well, go on ; sorry I interrupted you," he said, leaning back in his chair again, and relighting a cigar, which he had been chewing rather than smoking.

"Not at all," I said ; "your interruptions are complimentary ; they show how much my story interests you."

"That's all right," he replied. "Her name was Margaret, you said ?"

"Yes."

"Did he ever call her Maggie ?"

"No."

"Nor Meg ?"

"No."

"Never ?"

"Never."

"She was christened Margaret," he said, as if speaking to himself, "though we called her Meg, except when we called her Maggie."

"What were you saying ?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing—nothing. You set me thinking of the days when I was a boy."

"Then my story no longer interests you ?"

"Oh, yes, it does. Do you believe in fate ?"

"Yes, in a way."

"Do you believe in predestination ?"

“No.”

“Do you believe that an infernal rascal gets punished in this world, as a rule?”

“No.”

“I sometimes don’t,” he said, crossing his legs, and nursing his foot in a reflective way; “and yet if a fellow sows tares, he reaps tares; and the same book says that a man who lives by the sword, shall die by the sword, which is a bad look-out for us who have snatched our inheritance by fire and sword from the original Indian possessors. It’s all a muddle, I fear, as the poor fellow in the novel says—all a muddle. And yet—”

“Well, and yet what?”

“I cannot help thinking that considering the diabolical wrong a certain villain has done me, my claims to vengeance are so great that he cannot escape me; and that if instead of hunting him all over the world, I had sat down in one spot and waited, he would have come along in due time to have me tear his heart out.”

He rose and strode about the room, and then sat down again, nursing his foot, which he moved about in a curious way, that suggested both cunning and passion. I don’t know why I thought so at the time, but I did.

"I think I believe that a wicked or brutal action brings its own punishment."

"In this world?"

"Yes, and in the next."

"Oh, you believe in that, do you?"

"Yes."

"And how is the punishment to come in this world without an agent?"

"The Ruler of all will see to that."

"You think so?"

"Yes."

"And that a man may be called, as they say, to do the work of the Ruler of all?"

"I think so, but not to commit a crime."

"Oh, and what do you call crime? Do you define crime as the law does?"

"Yes, according to the laws that are human, and the laws that are Divine."

"Ah! and you would always call killing murder?" he asked, twirling his right foot as it hung carelessly over his left leg.

"Yes."

"Ah, we have a different law here, where self-protection is the order of the day, and where we judge as they did in the old days before professional lawyers and paid judges took up the reins between

them. Now, supposing I go down to the 'Castle,' even if I am ever so drunk, insult that woman there, outrage the hospitality of her husband, although he is of no account as some would say, do you know what the boys would do to me? Shoot me like a dog! And serve me right! Do you think it is the innate virtue of man that protects a woman right through these regions beyond the pale of law? No; sometimes it is the certainty of the death that follows outrage that makes gentlemen of the entire gang. No, my boy, killing is no murder in many a case. But enough of that; did you say this Willoughby was tall, polite, sandy, with a grand sort of air, conceited, cunning, with light eyes, a mouth like a vice, eh?"

"He is tall," I answered, "his hair is a light red, he has a moustache and imperial of the same colour, his eyes are a bluish grey, his manner is cold and haughty—a calculating manner—and his mouth what you can see of it underneath his moustache, is somewhat coarse."

"Not thin lips?"

"I think not. I should say a rather coarse, ill-shaped mouth."

"Ah, indeed," commented my host; "but a haughty manner?"

“An insolent manner would perhaps be a more truthful description,” I said.

“Yes, so it would,” remarked my host, as if he had in his mind the picture I had drawn of Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby.

“A harsh voice,” I continued, “and with an affected, hesitating manner of speaking.”

“I don’t remember that, yet you seem to recall a face and a man I hate. Would you call that manner of his a distinguished manner—in the common acceptance of that ambiguous phrase?”

“No; insolent, impertinent—the manner of a snob, not the harmless snob, but the snob who may have worn a gown at Oxford and disgraced it—a malicious snob!”

“You hate him!” exclaimed my host, with a certain malignant tone of satisfaction in his voice.

“I do not love him,” I replied.

“No, who could?” he remarked; “and yet she—but we will not speak of that. And after all this news of yours, as I interpret it, is too good to be true. I must be mad to think that such an accident as your meeting Wilkess could bring you here with the clue I am for ever seeking. No, no; Washy has not doused the drink out of me; and I’m dreaming—a ‘whisky dream’ as Lady Ann would

call it. Yet many a thing has been brought about by accident; many a discovery has been made by a fluke. Is it not so?"

✓ "Yes," I said; "the mines that have enriched San Francisco, for instance."

"And the silver of this region," he replied. "The first pioneers sought gold, didn't find it, and walked all over the silver they are now minting into currency. That is so. Did Miss Willoughby ever—"

He went to the doorway as if to collect his thoughts.

"I fear I have started painful memories; let us not talk any more about my petty hopes and fears."

"Did Miss Willoughby ever speak of her mother?" he asked, not heeding my remark.

"Oh, yes; several times. But it always struck me that she did so in a constrained manner; on account of her being dead, I always concluded."

"Did she speak of any other relation?"

"She said she had no relation in the world. She had a brother when she was a little girl, but he was long since dead."

"But her mother? What did she say about her mother?"

"Nothing that I remember in particular at the time I am telling you of; but just before we parted in London she made a strange and somewhat sad

communication to me. But you are confusing me a little. Let me finish, and then ask me any further questions afterwards. The interest you take in my affairs makes me anxious to tell you all. It is a pleasure to me to unburthen myself to you, since you take in me the interest of a friend."

"How long have we known each other?" he asked, laying his hand on mine.

"About twenty-four hours," I replied.

"It seems years. Go on with your story. Something tells me that I have a place in it. I may be wrong, stupidly wrong. My fancies may only be whisky after all; but go on, I won't put you out any more."

"I found it difficult," I continued, "to meet her after that; but my press friend managed it for me. He was a critic on one of the journals, and had not only the influence that belongs to a clever pen, but the influence that belongs to cultivated and educated manners, the influence that belongs to a gentleman. He brought her to my mother's house at Doughty Street, for I had confessed all to my mother, who, though at the outset she was inclined to oppose my wishes, consented to see the girl and give me her candid opinion of her and my desire that she should one day be my wife. My mother fell in love with her almost

at once. That was a great comfort to me. I had a scheme for making a fortune. A young fellow in our office had gone out to America. Soon after his arrival there, he gave up the business about which he went out, and joined some men who were going to the gold diggings. He wrote and invited me to come out. Before I had time to answer him I received another letter, saying that if I would come he would help me with money and advice; he was part owner of a profitable claim, and hoped to bring home twenty thousand pounds. I made a proposition to Margaret and to my mother. I would go out, I said, and if they would give me two years I would come back and marry. Margaret gave me at once her pledge to wait; and also, if anything happened which should give her the need of a home, she would accept the shelter of my mother's house. But she said I must have her father's consent. She knew how he had insulted me; nevertheless, I must put up with that for her sake; she had special reasons for asking it. We were alone when she said this, alone in the little dining-room at Doughty Street. I shall never forget that pleasant time. It seems like a dream, with a strange romance in it. We sat together; her hand rested in mine, and we talked of the days when I should return home, and it would not be necessary for

her to act any more, but that we would live a quiet, peaceful, happy life."

"But her father, this Willoughby," interrupted my host once more, "said she liked acting."

"That was not true," I answered. "He forced her upon the stage. He made that a means of courting the patronage and society of a certain class of fifth-rate nobility. He received her salary and lived by his wits. He accepted questionable invitations for her, and she promised that if necessary she would leave him, declare he was not her father, and seek my mother's protection. But, somehow, he exercised a peculiar fascination over her, and she was only brave when he was not present."

"You shouldn't have left her, by heaven you shouldn't!" said my host. "But go on to the end, I said I would not interrupt you."

"That is the end, I fear, unless you want an account of my failures on this side of the Atlantic. They began when I landed in New York, with news of the bankruptcy and death of the fellow-clerk who had induced me to come out."

"Don't mind him—he is all right. When a fellow's dead there is no more to be said; he is not to be pitied, for he is at rest; it is those whom he leaves behind who suffer; they only are entitled to

pity. Let us keep to Doughty Street for awhile longer. Did she not say anything about the terms on which they lived, her mother and this man—this step-father ? ”

“ I gathered that they were not happy together, and that they led a mysterious kind of life, going from place to place, and meeting curious people. Once they spent several months in Vienna. I don’t know much about such things, but I would not be surprised if Willoughby was at that time employed as a Russian spy. The Czar, I know, has all kinds of people at work for him in Europe. One of my brothers is in the diplomatic service.”

“ But Russia pays well, eh ? ”

“ I suppose so.”

“ Yet this Willoughby is evidently hard-up, or was when last you saw him ? ”

“ He may have been kicked out of the Russian service,” I suggested.

“ Would he not then have sold himself to some other government, or to the police ? ”

“ He is a gambler,” I said ; “ and even cheats, I observe, have their ups and downs.”

“ That’s true,” he said ; “ and Margaret is very pretty ? ”

“ Yes,” I said ; “ not the mere prettiness of pretty

features, but the prettiness—the beauty that belongs to a kind heart, the sweetness that comes from pure thoughts, in spite of foul surroundings; the sweetness of a rose blooming among nettles; a flower of rare colour and perfume, that makes a pure world of its own, however much it may be crowded with tares. Have you not seen such in a neglected garden?”

“Yes, yes,” he answered; “in a neglected garden.”

Then, rising again from his chair, he walked about the room, went to the door and opened it for a moment, the rain beating in upon him. There was a strange light in his eyes as he turned towards me when he closed the door, and a more or less elevated expression in his face.

“For the rain it raineth every day,” he said, standing by the table, and looking at me. “Did you ever hear that other song beginning ‘I had a flower within my garden growing?’ A poor, hard-up wretch, a broken-down fellow, in Denver, sung it outside a bar-room one evening, and set me thinking of a garden I once knew, with a lovely woman and a happy father and two little children in it, and roses and sunshine and a dear friend; and, by Heaven! I was not sober for two weeks after-

wards. A wolf in sheep's clothing came into that garden—. But there, go on, old chap, let us get back to that curse of the world, Fitzherbert Willoughby."

He sat down again in an attitude of attention, but with a face that had, it seemed to me, suddenly lost its colour.

"Go on, partner, I am listening," he said; "go on."

## CHAPTER VI.

## A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

"BUT you are not drinking," I said, "and your cigar is out."

"That's all right, my friend. I came across his track twice, only twice, once in Paris, once in San Francisco; on those two occasions I had a strange beating here" (laying his hand on his heart), "and here" (pressing his hand upon his forehead). "I had the same sensation when I led my men into my first fight with the Indians; the same when I struck my pick into the vein of ore that feeds the Revenge mine; and I feel it now, I feel it now."

"Over-excitement," I said.

"Maybe," he replied. "I thought it might be drink—it isn't. It is a token of success, a forecast that nature has a sign for. It is one of those mysterious signals that you only get to understand by being alone in the world—alone and a brooder; alone and a believer in omens; alone and a student of nature. Now, Hickory Maynard, let us get to the

end of this long lane. I said you ought not to have left her with that beast. Perhaps I was wrong."

"It was only at the last moment that I learnt all: when my trunks were packed; when my passage was taken, and it seemed as if there was nothing else to be done; then I think she told me all to nerve my arm, and make it strong."

"She would know best, God bless her!" said Dick; "no doubt she would. But I wouldn't have left her had I been you."

"Don't say that, friend. I would have only been too glad to stay by her side."

"What did she say at last, then, about her mother?"

"I went to her father, and, in spite of his rudeness, I told him I had a prospect of wealth, that I was going abroad for two years, and that I wanted his permission to correspond with his daughter with a view to marriage at the end of that time, should my financial position be satisfactory to him. 'I give my consent,' he said, in his pompous way, 'young sir, I give my consent—'"

"Go on; imitate him—imitate him!" exclaimed Dick. "Is that how he talked?"

"Yes, something like it," I said.

“By heaven! you have no idea how you interest me—what hopes you fill me with. Go on; go on.”

“On this condition, sir; that there is nothing so binding between you that shall, ah, prevent my engaging her hand to another in the meantime; if you succeed in, ah, your views, and make a fortune, which I shall take leave to doubt, for I know something of the land of the West, sir, as the song has it, and don’t think much of it, ah, no, sir; but do your best. You have letters, you say, important letters; well, I wish you success, and I am sure we understand each other. You are free, Miss Willoughby is free, I am free.”

“And yet you left her!” my host exclaimed again.

“I had no alternative. You seem to doubt my love; you don’t doubt my courage. The greatest act of heroism I ever committed was in leaving her,” I said.

“And that is how he talked, eh? Lofty, was he? And he had been on this side, had he?”

“He led me to believe so.”

“And she—had she?”

“I suppose not, or she would have said so.”

“Ah, I daresay I am wrong altogether. She said something very important the day you parted?”

“Yes.”

“What was it? Did she ever talk of the time when she was very little, before that brother died?”

“No.”

“Not how they played together, and how they were separated?”

“No.”

“God have mercy on me! I shall go mad!” he exclaimed.

“I beg your pardon,” I said. “I am distressing you.”

“No, no; you can’t see where my wild dream is carrying me. Did she say nothing more—nothing about me?”

“About you!” I exclaimed.

“No, how could she,” he said; and I feared I was about to have an experience of that other phase of my host’s character, which was described by Lady Ann—a crank when sober—for I had had evidence of the possibility of his fiendishness when drunk.

“Of course not,” he said, sitting down again and composing himself; “but do you mind telling me all about that last interview, because with that throbbing of my heart I told you of has come into the sympathetic throbbing of my head the conviction

that I know Miss Willoughby and her so-called father."

"Is it possible?" I said.

"Perhaps," he replied; "for, as we have already both admitted, everything is possible to him who waits."

He was very calm, and had lighted another cigar, so I finished my story; and it was time, seeing that the cuckoo clock in Wash's kitchen cooed the hour of twelve.

"The day we parted she said,—shall I tell you every word? We were standing in the room where I first saw her; he had consented to our leave-taking. 'You have no reason to fear I shall not be true and faithful, no matter what he says. For my sake you have humbled yourself to him, and I am glad you have done so, for I may now sometimes mention your name. Moreover, if you should come back rich, he will keep his word. If you should come back poorer than you are now, that will make no difference to my plighted troth; always supposing, dear, that you continue in the same mind.'

"I could only say, 'My darling,' for my heart was too full.

"'And don't be afraid,'" she continued, 'that he

will coerce me to do anything you might object to. He is not my father, and, if it becomes necessary, I will leave him and declare it. When my mother died, she told me that her husband and my father died through an accident when I was a child ; that his name is not Willoughby ; that he is not a good man. She was about, I think, to tell me my father's name and his, but her strength failed her, and she never spoke again. So you see,' said my poor little sweetheart, 'if you marry me you will marry an orphan, and a nameless one, for God knows who I am, I do not.'"

"Lord help her!" exclaimed Dick Drummond, "no. But I do!"

"You?"

"Yes, I," he said. "Give me your hand, Hickory Maynard; you shall not only be my partner, you shall be my brother. *You are engaged to my sister!*"

## Part III.

## CHAPTER I.

## IN THE SHADOW OF A CRIME.

"I SHALL sleep to-night, partner—brother that is to be," said my host; "sleep as I have not slept since I was a boy."

He paced the room—not hurriedly, but in a quiet, contented way—and talked as he walked.

"I feel like a man who has been making a long journey, and who, having the goal well in sight, goes to bed, knowing that he can reach it comfortably before noon the next day. When a fellow has lived alone for years, with one idea, one desire in his mind, he gradually grows out of sympathy with the world, except in so far as it can help him in his enterprise, whatever it may be. Sometimes I have wondered whether I should end my life in a workhouse or a gaol, or on the gallows. Don't be afraid. You look anxious; you are concerned for me, my boy."

"I am, yes, hearing you talk so wildly."

"It does me good that you feel so; it gives me a

foretaste of the pleasure I count upon in making you and her happy—my sister Maggie, my brother Hickory. You are religious, are you not? I heard you praying last night, and I can tell you are religious by the way Washington has taken to you.”

“I always pray when I go to bed,” I said. “It is a habit with me, as much as a religious exercise.”

“But you believe—as they say, you have faith?”

“I hope so.”

“I try to sometimes,” he said, pausing to look down upon me, for I sat quietly in my chair while he paced the room; “but I always feel as if that old Satan who warred with Heaven has still a hand in the government; as if, like Homer, the King nodded and let Satan get his hand in again; as if the King gave His old foe a respite now and then—unchained him and let him have his fling; otherwise, how can you account for the infernal things that happen? Do you really believe with Pope that Heaven

“Sees with equal eyes, as God of all,  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall?”

“Yes,” I said; “but, at the same time, when you quote these lines, you should remember the context which claims that ‘Heaven, from all creatures, hides the Book of Fate, all but the page prescribed

their present state.' Otherwise, as he says—for I remember the passage to which you refer—

“ ‘ Who could suffer being here below ?  
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?  
Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,  
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.’ ”

“ That is so ; but it proves nothing. To my mind, it would be a fairer contract between Heaven and man if we had some sort of agreement and understanding as to what we had to carry, what to do, what to suffer in this life. We come here without choice, our sanction is not asked, we suffer or are happy, we are poor or rich, ignorant or learned ; we are sickly or strong, mad or sane, no questions asked ; and we become meet for Heaven or hell, just the same, without a ‘ by-your-leave,’ or what not. And yet a sparrow does not fall without sanction, you say ; I can’t take it in, for the life of me. And I have tried, too—tried hard and prayed.”

“ You are touching upon great problems,” I said, “ that I make it a point not to discuss. For my part, I accept my life for what it is worth, and I do not quarrel with its surroundings, though to me they have been hard and sour. I have faith in things coming right. I think it is good for men to be

tried by adversity, to go through the fire, to remember how much more the Redeemer of the world suffered than anything they can suffer. I accept the conflict, and the corner of the great battle of life in which it is my lot to fight, and I go on trusting and hoping, and believing that good must come out of bad at last—that there is sunshine behind the cloud ; and that if this is not so here on earth, the reward will come in Heaven.”

“Happy fellow ! happy fellow !” my host exclaimed. “And you believe in Heaven, in the life to come, with its everlasting sunshine and its languid bliss ?”

“Yes, I do ; this life would be a very poor business without such a hope, such a belief.”

“Oh, I don’t know that ; it all depends who your father is, where you are born, and under what circumstances. Take the son of a wealthy English peer, with a splendid record, a long rent-roll, a well-balanced mind, a strong constitution, a noble ambition, a happy marriage ; the heaven on earth which he enjoys is a finer thing than the paradise of the religionists, with its everlasting praising of the King, and its nullity of ambition. But why should my neighbour, this wealthy, well-bred son of a peer, be born to all this real, tangible bliss, while another

comes into the world to an inheritance of misery, of hell upon earth—a faithless mother, a drunken father, and a mission of vengeance ? ”

“ Your illustrations refute your negative belief—that is, if you really do think this life is its be-all and end-all—unless there were a future, then, indeed, the two instances you mention would be an outrage upon justice. But the Divine Ruler gives to each here below his responsibility, his talent, and in making up their accounts at last, much more will be expected of that peer’s son than of him whose father was a drunkard, whose mother was untrue.”

“ Yes, that is the religion of the poor, invented by the rich, that they may keep down the poor with sophistry and promises of the palaces in Heaven which they can never hope to have on earth.”

“ But Christ promised more to the poor than to the rich,” I said.

“ He knew how wretched they are, and administered to them accordingly. But do not let me shake your faith, especially at the moment when I have something more than a glimmering of Heaven’s recognition of the eternal fitness of things. It may be that the recording angel who presides over the book of Fate has in the course of His business come to my name and his (it cannot be that our mutual

aliases have disguised us from Him) and her's; it may be that His stern eye has rested on me in these mountains that have no sunny Pisgah at their base; it may be that He has sent you here, for your own sake and mine, as a reward for your faith, and as the medium of a long-delayed action; for it cannot be that He has forgotten what is due to that fiend in human shape whom I have so long prayed to meet again, and who is destined to reap as he has sown."

"Ah, Dick Drummond, my dear friend, I wish you could think only of the good, the happiness there may be in this meeting of ours, without thinking of the bad. I don't profess to be religious by a long way; I have done things which truly pious people would condemn severely."

"But is not life from your standpoint," he said, with a sarcastic smile, "speculating in futures? Thinking of your sins, you have no doubt got Chicago in your mind."

"Yes," I said, and I could not help smiling at my host's adaptation of a leading enterprise in a great city.

"Ah, it's no good talking," he said, "about what neither of us know anything; I am willing to believe that Fate has once more remembered me and my mission; let us go to bed. Sleep is the most

merciful invention—dreamless sleep. Good-night, old fellow—good-night, I hope this is not all a dream, eh?”

“I could well-nigh believe it is,” I said.

“Go to bed, and pray it into reality,” he replied.

“I am half inclined to believe that the miracle is of your work, if it be a miracle. Shake hands.”

He took my hand with a strong grip. His eyes were very bright, though his face had a calm expression; the anxious, watchful look it had worn at first had gone out of it. He was like a man who had solved a long investigated problem; he seemed to rest upon it, but only for the time; as if there were achievements to follow, as if the present end were only an outpost conquered, and the citadel lay beyond.”

“I hope you’ll never regret meeting me,” he said.

“I am sure I shall not.”

“Don’t be too sure.”

“I never was more sure about anything.”

“We have not done with each other yet.”

“I hope not.”

“Fate brought you here.”

“For a good purpose,” I said.

“Yes, no doubt; Fate works in mysterious ways.”

"For Fate read God," I said.

"Call it what you like, Hickory," he replied, solemnly; "men call it by all kinds of names. I want you to make me a promise."

"What is it?"

"A promise at present," he said; "later I may ask you to make it a vow."

"Yes?" I said, with an inquiring look into his calm face.

"May!" he said, "I shall, of course—a solemn vow, not to be broken, sworn as if on the Book in a Court of Justice. Will you do it?"

"If it is a right thing to do," I said.

"Yes, of course," he replied; it will depend upon what you may consider right; but I will strengthen your judgment, with interest, with an all-powerful interest—your own personal happiness."

"Ah, my friend, I fear you have made a low estimate of me. There are great things a man may do for nothing, there are little things a man's highest personal interest cannot bribe him to do."

"I shall bribe you, nevertheless," said Dick, with a smile, as he rose and laid his hand upon my shoulder, "I shall bribe you."

"Indeed," I said, looking up at him.

"Yes, and you will be unable to resist me. I shall buy that vow you will make to me."

"Shall you?" I said; "well, we shall see. I would do a great deal for you, Dick Drummond; you have been very good to me; you have excited in me a strange interest in you, and touched deep chords of friendship. I like you very much indeed, old chap, and I am sure you will never ask me to do anything that is not honourable and that one man may not ask from another. When you talk of a bribe you are using a figure of speech, are you not?"

"I don't know," he answered, pacing the room, and then facing me at the other end of the table; "we will settle that later. I think you are bound to do what I ask; I believe you are here for a purpose; that—But we will talk more of this in due time. You only know me as Dick Drummond, and you only know my sister as Margaret Willoughby."

"That is all I do know," I said.

"But what has passed between us is our secret—the secret of this hut; when you write home to her, or to your mother, or to anybody, you will not mention in any way, by hint, or suggestion, or directly, that Margaret Willoughby is my sister."

"But some day I may?" I answered.

“Never, unless with my consent,” he said solemnly, my hand in his. “Have I your promise, your word of honour?”

“You have.”

“That’s enough—good-night.”

He might have said morning, for old Wash’s cuckoo clock murmured three when I blew out my candle and the moonlight streamed into my chamber.

## CHAPTER II.

## ON A SEA OF DOUBT AND WONDER.

I COULD not sleep. In spite of the difference of time, I tried to think the moon was shining on Doughty Street in London, and on Buckingham Street, Strand. I followed its calm beams down into the quiet corner of the great city, where Margaret was sleeping, close by the shadows of the old Water Gate near the Thames. I saw the mighty stream of life flow along the Strand, and fancied Buckingham Street a quiet backwater with the moon shining upon it.

Then I wandered away in my fancy to the semi-fashionable quarter of Mecklenburgh Square, with its comfortable, solid houses, and their old-world associations; and I saw the porter opening the gates that lead into Doughty Street, to admit a cab in which I was chafing against the delay that kept me from my mother's arms.

Who could know so well as I the sleepless nights she had passed, thinking of me? My heart ached at the thought of her tender solicitude for my welfare.

I pictured her dear, loving face, with its mild eyes looking down upon me. I seemed to feel her lips pressing my forehead as they had done when I was a boy, and pretended to be asleep that she might go to bed the happier for thinking I slept.

Then I saw Margaret at the theatre, and followed her with tears in my eyes through the sorrowful story of the play; and then I started up, broader awake than ever, to shudder at the man who called himself her father.

I got up, relighted the candle, drew the curtain across my window to shut out the moon, took from my trunk a packet of letters and read several of them over and over again.

"Think of me only as a happy girl, my dear Hickory," she wrote to me at New York. That was when I was half-starved for want of food, and hopeless for want of any prospect of work.

"My dearest boy, come home if you are not well; come home if your prospects are not good; come home under any circumstances, for I am very, very sad without you," wrote my mother.

And, oh! how I wished I dared go home then. But how could I, empty-handed—nothing done? "Whatever troubles I may have are as nought

compared to the knowledge that I have your love," wrote Margaret to Chicago.

"You are brave as you are good, my dear Hickory," wrote my mother, "and God will take care of you; pray to Him always, and pray for me. Your sweetheart is well; I went to see her play a new part at the Adelphi, and she acted it charmingly."

To think of my mother not only accepting an actress as her prospective daughter, but going to the theatre to see her! Could I desire any further proof of her love for me? What a story I should have to tell her of my wanderings, and of my discovery of Dick!

Then I began to think of the promise he had exacted from me, and to wonder whether he meant to keep always in that background of non-identity which he had indicated.

The more I thought, the more puzzled I became and the more strange did it seem to me that, after all my profitless adventures, I should be here comfortably housed with a man who claimed to be my Margaret's brother, and who, being rich, declared that I should be his partner. Was it all a dream? I asked myself, as he had asked.

I put away my letters and examined my host's bookshelf.

There were only a few volumes upon it. They had all been carefully read, judging by their dog's-eared condition. Pope's "Essay on Man," "Hamlet," "The Works of Thomas Paine," "Selections from Fénelon," "Shelley's Works," "The Bible," "Practical Mining," "Fate: an Essay by Ralph Waldo Emerson," "Evidences of Insanity," "The Science of War," and the first volume of "The Odes of Horace," in their original Latin text.

These were his books. The first I opened was the last-mentioned volume. I found it marked, and here and there translations of the text written on the margin. One of the stanzas at the close of the volume was marked with extra lines, the translation written out in red ink. This was the text:—

" Solvat phaselum. Sæpe Diespiter  
Neglectus incesto addidit integrum :  
Rarò antecedentem scelestum  
Deseruit pede pœna claudo."

And this the translation:—

" When Jove in anger strikes the blow,  
Oft with the bad the righteous bleed ;  
Yet with sure steps, though lame and slow,  
Vengeance o'ertakes the trembling villain's speed."

Memories of my somewhat fruitless classic studies at Oxford thus aroused at sight of Horace sent me to

Fénélon. I opened the volume at a passage marked this time with a pencil, in the dialogues of the dead, where Gryllus answered the question of Ulysses—  
“ And are you senseless and brutish enough to despise wisdom, which makes men almost equal to the gods? ”  
The following portions of the answer were marked :—  
“ Of what advantage is that much boasted wisdom ?  
All the use man makes of it is to gratify his passion. Talk not of man ; he is the most irrational of animals. Without flattering myself, a hog is a clever creature ; he does not coin false money, nor does he draw false contracts ; he never forswears himself, undertakes no unjust and bloody conquests, is ingenuous without malice, and spends his life in eating and sleeping. Far better for the world if we all imitated his example. Talk not to me of reason, for man is filled with folly ; and one had better be a hog than a man having wisdom who only uses it for brutish wickedness.”

Sad as this black-and-white evidence of my host's misanthropy made me, I could not help thinking that if I questioned him on this extract from Fénélon, he might say he had marked it as a tribute to Chicago ; for he had a grim humour, behind which he hid some great purpose, for good or bad.

One may often arrive at a pretty fair estimate of a

man's character by a study of the books he reads, especially when his library is a small one.

I turned to the great American sage, and found Emerson marked as follows:—"When the gods in the Norse heaven were unable to bind the Fenn's Wolf with steel or with weight of mountains—the one he snapped and the other he spurned with his beel—they put round his foot a limp band, softer than silk or cobweb, and this held him; the more he spurned it, the stiffer it drew. So soft and so staunch is the ring of Fate. Neither brandy, nor nectar, nor sulphuric ether, nor hell-fire, nor ichor, nor poetry, nor genius, can get rid of this limp band. For if we give it the high sense in which the poets use it, even thought itself is not above Fate."

Here the marking ended, and it occurred to me to make note of the three lines that followed, since the student seemed to be fortifying himself with authorities:—"That (Fate), too, must act according to eternal laws, and all that is wilful and fantastic in it is in opposition to its fundamental essence."

"Hamlet" was thumbed, and scored throughout with pen and pencil. Every line that stabbed the reputation of woman, each moral dagger spoken by the Prince to his mother, all the lines that were

heavy with Hamlet's mission of revenge, every curse he flung at his uncle, all these passages were marked, as if the reader felt his feet deep in Hamlet's shoes, or felt so keenly for his hero that he wished to be there; or, what was more like, compared his own real wrongs and hardships with those of the fictitious sufferer. Wherever the murder of Hamlet's father was mentioned, there the reader had made the deepest marks. "I, the son of a dear father murdered," for instance, and "the serpent that did sting thy father's life now wears his crown."

As I sat with "Hamlet" in my hand, thinking how strange it was to find in the "Boss of Drummond's Gulch" a student of Horace and Shakespeare, and Tom Paine and Fénelon; and how much stranger still to find in that man not only the clue to the mystery of Margaret Willoughby, but her very brother, my eyes rested upon a volume that had escaped me; it was lying on a small box upon another shelf; I noticed it now because it was better bound than most of the others. It turned out to be a special favourite of mine—an English translation of Alphonse Karr's "Tour round my Garden." It was marked like the rest, but not with a vicious emphasis as they seemed to be. They were old marks, too, most of them, and showed an appreciation

of the poetry of the volume, and its wonderful revelations of natural phenomena.

The first passage I came upon was a challenge to me, who had been wondering at the strangeness of my coming here, the lost link in a mysterious chain of human suffering and sorrow, perhaps to be the first link in a continuing chain of love and joy.

"I burn, my friend, to know what account you will oppose to this, you who have travelled so far; I defy you even to venture a falsehood so extraordinary as this truth which I have just exhibited to you."

Then I came upon this passage marked, evidently long ago, but with an apparently recent comment written in the margin. This was the text—"A few minutes afterwards a ray of sunshine dissipated the clouds; I believed that I had been heard, and I thanked God as earnestly as I had prayed." The prayer had been "that the rain might cease." This was the comment. "But supposing somebody else wanted quite as badly the refreshing blessing of the rain."

The same trains of thoughts running through the reader's mind always—unbelief, except in a vicious and fantastic Fate; a sense of deep, bitter injury, a lifelong sense of wrong, a lifelong thirst for vengeance.

"Who is he, then," I asked myself, "that broods over a blasted childhood, an embittered youth, and

courts a miserable old age? Who is he that calls himself my love's brother, who asks me to be his partner, claims me as his brother that is to be? Who is he, this man with a strange method in his madness, that pledges me to keep his secret, pledges me before I know what his secret is? Am I right to let the prospect of wealth influence me so far?"

I bethought me of Hamlet as I questioned myself and his doubt of the ghost. Might not his influence be evil? Did he hope to use me as his tool in some nefarious scheme? Was he mad? They said so in the camp. That he was a brute when in his cups I had ample proof. Did he seek to obtain some special influence over me by claiming relationship with Margaret?

Or was Fate drifting me into some horrible complication?

While my thoughts were tossed on a sea of doubt and wonder, the book in my hand slipped open at the half-title page, upon which there was writing. I looked at it in a mechanical kind of way, and read:—

*"For Remembrance."*

To GEORGE NEWBOLDE—this May-day Gift.  
From his friend, and pastor,

DIGBY OLIPHANT.

*Sandwich, May 1st, 18—.*

“The vicar!” I said to myself, “George Newbolde—Sandwich! Can it be? Is this the artist’s son, then, who seeks to avenge his father’s honour, his father’s death? Great Heavens! is this my Maggie’s brother? And Fitzherbert Willoughby, is he the villain who desolated the old home at Sandwich? And am I selected by Providence, or by Fate, to be the means of retribution, the instrument of vengeance, or the messenger of peace and goodwill?”

“Why, golly! Massa Maynard, yo’s e neber been to bed, I declar!” exclaimed a voice at the door; “why, yo’ is a scholar to be settin’ a-readin’ all de bressed night. And de Boss, him sleep as if dere was no resurrection—neber see a pusson sleep no faster dan he is. Has yo’ been readin’ dat same book all de night? Den yo’ must have found it bery interesting.”

“I have, Washy,” I said. “I never read anything that has interested me so much in all my life as something I have read in this book.”

“Is dat so?”

“It is so, indeed.”

## CHAPTER III.

WHICH PROVES THE TRUTH OF THE ADAGE THAT  
YOU GO FROM HOME TO HEAR NEWS.

WE both regarded each other, Dick Drummond and I, that day from a new and deeply interesting standpoint.

He had discovered to me the secret of Margaret Willoughby's parentage. I had stumbled upon the ambition of his career. The pastoral, gentle life developed in "A Tour round my Garden," was a strange background for the tragic story of Sandwich, and its vow of vengeance registered by the boy of the old manse.

And yet upon the fly-leaf of this volume was inscribed in those few words of the vicar the leading points of my host's career and mission.

I resolved to keep this discovery to myself for a time, since the "Boss of Drummond's Gulch" had promised to give me a sketch of his life and ambition. I thought it best to see how it tallied with the brief story of the vicar. Not that I any longer mistrusted

my host. I did not ; but it came into my mind to act as I say, and I do not regret it, seeing that the hero of the morning's narrative gave me details of his mother's flight, his father's death, and his own remarkable adventures which he would probably not otherwise have mentioned.

It troubles me sometimes, when I am putting these chronicles together, the reflection that the heroine of this history, Margaret Willoughby, will only learn the true story of her life when my narrative is published. It is possible she may never see these pages. If she becomes possessed of the clue to her own story, she may pick it up concurrently with the discovery of it by the reader hereof. Need I say that I thought of her continually during these eventful days at Drummond's Gulch ?

My host slept until nearly midday. Wash peeped in at the door many times, fearing he must be dead.

"Neber slep so much afore," he said.

"And perhaps never will again," said Dick, himself awakening while Wash was speaking, "until he sleeps for good."

"You have indeed had a rare spell of it this time," I said, as he huddled on an old jacket and trousers.

"Yes," he replied, "but I am very wide awake

now—I have been dreaming ugly dreams for years and years ; and now I have left them behind for ever. Have a smoke while I bathe.”

I walked with him to the edge of the cliffs, and then sat down while he worked his way along a natural path to the river. It was a glorious day. The air was full of a healthy perfume of pines and flowers. The distant mountains appeared to be but a mile or two away instead of fifty. An eagle or some other great wild bird sailed in the blue above me, and a cluster of butterflies were hovering over the bush at my feet. The scene was beautiful beyond description, and silent as beautiful. I smoked and dreamed. Should I presently awake ?

I could not help wondering why people crowd and jostle each other in great cities, when there are thousands of miles of paradise unoccupied. I built in fancy a home for Margaret and my mother on the other side of the river, and saw George’s hut changed into a solid stone house in a garden ; and in short took them all into my pleasant dream and dreamed it out to the end ; but the end was a mystery. Who can finish this dream of life and death to his own satisfaction ?

Presently I could see Dick Drummond breasting the torrent or floating with it, and I found myself

wishing that in this world we could all float with the stream and never have to turn and face it and fight it, some of us to go down under the roar and rush of it, some to conquer it and find a haven of quiet and learned leisure.

"You are in a thoughtful mood this morning," said Dick, when he had climbed the steep and once more stood by my side.

"Yes, everything is so peaceful, there seems a general invitation to be reflective."

"That is how you feel?"

"It is."

"Then you are not physically hungry?"

"No."

"Intellectually?"

"No."

"Enjoying your weed, you are experiencing the sensation of a true smoker—don't want to be disturbed. But we must not disappoint Washy. Come along. Fried chicken for breakfast, Virginia fashion, Washy's best dish. You should have had a swim."

"Didn't feel like it this morning," I said.

"After breakfast we'll have a long lazy jaw, if you like, eh?"

"Yes."

"And you shall try a new cigar, a new brand

which Lady Ann has sent up from the Gulch, 'real grit,' as they say. Lady Ann! I wonder what will become of her when I leave the Gulch."

"Do you think of leaving?"

"Some day," he said; "to-morrow, perhaps."

"You are joking."

"Do I joke much?"

"No, on reflection I don't think you do; let us eat."

It was a fine breakfast considering how far we were from civilization. Grilled sardines, fried chicken, buckwheat cakes, and coffee worthy of the best London club. And Washy waited as well as he cooked. A good negro is the greatest of all treasures as a servant. Born to serve, when he is proud of his work, capable and well treated, he is the best and truest servant in the world.

"Now, Washy, where are the new cigars?"

"'Ere de are, sah; and Lady Ann, she say his lordship finds dem de best he hab eber smoked."

"That's all right; leave the coffee, Washy."

"Yes, sah."

"Now, Mr. Thoughtful, make yourself comfortable, and we'll converse," said Dick.

He seemed like a new man this morning: held his head erect; the old settled, anxious expression had

gone out of his eyes; his voice even had improved; there was more of the gentleman and less of the "Boss of Drummond's Gulch" in his manner.

"Did you ever come across this book?" asked my host, handing me Hollis Read's "Hand of God in History."

"No."

"I read all sides, you see."

"And yet stand only by one."

"You mean I am an unbeliever?"

"Not quite."

"Well, I am not a Christian in the full meaning of the term any way—and not by a great deal."

"What do you believe?"

"Well, in evolution, as Darwin described it."

"Oh, then, we begin as tadpoles, and end as food for worms?"

"Yes, pretty much like that. But for all that I read the other side, I tell you, and am open to conviction."

"As voters at elections are," I said.

"You mean that I am open to a bribe. Well, to a certain extent, yes—that is, I want what I have prayed for. I want justice, the punishment of vice. I used to pray for it. Lately I have been content to wait, to bide my time."

“You have odd notions about prayer.”

“Perhaps ; my leading idea concerning prayer is that it braces one up, to try and be equal to or worthy of what one asks for. But last night I began to think that Read may be right. He traces every event of historical importance to the hand of God. ‘Events, apparently contradictory, often,’ he says, ‘stand in the relation of cause and effect : a Pharoah and a Nebuchadnezzar, an Alexander and a Nero, a Domitian and a Borgia, Henry VIII. and Napoleon, men world-renowned, yet oftentimes prodigies of wickedness, are in every age made the instruments and the agents to work out the scheme of God’s operations.’”

“They are striking illustrations of his belief, those you have named,” I said.

“Well, I think so too, and I am piecing out my case as one that may come into that category. Since the outrage of a fiend with the soul of a Nero or a Tarquin is practically the cause of my being here, my wrongs are the seeds from which a new world will grow up ; a new world that will give work and food to thousands who, but for the discoveries on this spot, might have starved ; nay, one might carry the theory of possible good much further. And so I am trying to fit your arrival here as part of the

scheme of foresight; you come when the foundation of this new world beyond the Rockies is laid, to point the way to some compensation for miseries undeserved, in the rescue of my sister from captivity; and you come as the messenger who hands to the executioner the warrant of death. Thus the wronged are avenged; and so we follow out the programme of the author and philosopher."

"Ah, Dick Drummond," I said, "you are trying to justify to your conscience the committal of a crime. The devil, you know, can quote scripture for his purpose."

"I was not quoting scripture," he replied, turning towards me his steadfast eyes, and smiling satirically; "poor old Read is not scripture; Darwin is perhaps better than either, but that is neither here nor there, and I don't wish to hurt your orthodox feelings."

"What good will it do to your sister, or to any one, if you kill that man?"

"That beast, you mean; you would leave him to repent and be saved, for he could, you know, at the last moment; and what good would that do to those whose lives he has blasted—to the dear good fellow whom he murdered, eh? If I go to heaven I don't propose to have him there. Listen, Maynard, and I'll tell you my story; until you have heard it you

cannot properly understand my sentiments or opinions. Moreover, from this day, with your permission, you are my partner in the Gulch property, and with my permission, my sister shall be your partner in love and marriage. But on conditions, mark you, on conditions."

"What are the conditions, Dick?"

"All in good time; they will not be onerous; one condition may trouble you a little, but it will be in the interest of her happiness, and an act of self-denial on my part, so great that you cannot deny me, unless I am mistaken in your character. We shall see."

"Proceed, my friend, I hope I appreciate your kindly motives, and that I am not ungrateful for the generous reception you gave me, a stranger, and a debtor for the little money I brought into the camp."

"Oh, that's nothing," he said; "you had claims on me that I could not have shirked even had I been a brute; Wilkess has the right of a true friend to command me, hand, heart, and pocket. But you want to know how I come to be Maggie's brother, why I hate that man who is your enemy and hers, how she and I come to be separated, and why it is we have not seen each other since we were children, and that she is under the impression I am dead. I recall the memory of a few happy months, a pretty

home, a garden full of flowers, a river whose course out to sea I could trace from my bedroom window. My father was a painter. I have sat for his model, and once I went to London with him to see the Royal Academy Exhibition, where two of his pictures were hung on the line—one of them, with Maggie and me as ‘Babes in the Wood.’ Little did the painter dream how he had forecast our fate, in so far as the cruel treatment we were destined to receive, when he should—as he did soon afterwards—lay down his brushes for ever.”

His voice faltered, and he walked to the door of the hut. As he stood there gazing out at the sky, he looked the picture of a strong man.

Turning his face towards me as he came back to his seat, I noticed that there were tears in his eyes. It was a handsome, thoughtful, more or less careworn face. He looked like a man who had travelled, like a man who had fought his way in life, and there was a strong intellectuality in his eyes and forehead.

There were streaks of grey about the temples of his closely cut hair, and light touches of “the silver of age” were repeated on his short dark beard.

He had something of a military air, and he moved slowly, and had the sort of swing in his gait that men get after long marches. He was not more than

twenty-eight, and he looked forty, but with the full strength and vigour of forty.

A trifle over the medium height, he was broad across the chest, and muscular. His voice was somewhat harsh as a rule, though now and then, in moments when the better feelings of his nature were excited, it was soft and even musical.

Now and then since the previous night, when he declared himself Maggie's brother, I traced the likeness between himself and Maggie, not in appearance so much as in manner, not in the features of the face so much as in the occasional expression of the eyes and mouth. While he reseated himself and looked at me as if inviting me to continue the conversation, there was in his face something of the tender, wistful, regretful, wondering look I had seen in Maggie's.

"Were you only once in London?" I asked, more with a view of breaking in upon his melancholy than for information.

"Yes, twice," he said, "the first time full of joy, the second of misery; the first time the bliss of childhood, the second the despair of a broken heart; the first time innocent, the second time having tasted of the bitter fruit; the first time with a toy in my hand, the second time with a dagger. It is so in storms at sea; a day of gentle calm, a placid

ocean, a sunny sky, dreams of heaven; then you should make all taut, for the hurricane is not far away, the night of terror is at hand, the sea a boiling abyss, the ship a coffin, her torn sails ragged mourning plumes. And this is life, my friend. My sunny day was the love of that kind father, the embraces of that sweet sister; and sometimes my mother kissed me. Then came a guest to our house—a gentleman from London; he had been a friend of my father when they were young fellows. His name was Lucas—‘Chingford Lucas, M.A.’ I remember reading on his card the first time our servant brought it into my father’s studio. He was one of your excessively polite men, curly hair, a light waxed moustache, a high pale forehead, delicately shaped nostrils, a slight stammer in his speech, which my mother said denoted high breeding, had white hands, shiny boots, well-fitting clothes, and a patronizing manner. You say my mother is dead?”

This with a sudden change of manner.

“Yes; Maggie’s mother is dead,” I replied.

“It is well; may she be forgiven, if that judgment-seat exists, which the parsons and their Book tell us of! She had known this Lucas before she married my father; he had loved her, people said in their shameless, gossiping way, and dared to be

jealous that my father had married her. She had the fatal endowment of beauty, without brains, my poor mother, beauty, without strong moral training, much beauty and little heart, poor soul. This Lucas, this gentleman, professed to be rich, he had some money, a few thousand pounds, lived in chambers, gave my father commissions for pictures, and obtained orders for others; at the same time he lured him to London, as it turned out to his ruin, introduced him to fast clubs, initiated him into gambling, made him the hero of smoking parties, and sent the dear fellow home with his London habits; so that he took to calling at the little hotel in our quiet country town and taking a drink with this man and the other, and horrified us more than once by getting intoxicated. Then he would enter upon a period of strict moderation, even of abstinence from wine altogether. A kind, clerical neighbour of ours the vicar of an adjacent parish, had some influence with him, and he helped Maggie and me to keep him at home; for my mother professed to be too much scandalized to take any care about him. This Lucas would say kindly-sounding things to her in my father's interest, and was full of professed sympathy; but, as the poor woman said, 'Mr. Lucas was such a gentleman, so high bred, had such refined feelings,'

that she 'wondered he should really take so much interest in George.' I hated this Chingford Lucas, M.A.—hated him with a dog's instinct; the more he courted my good opinion, the more I hated him. Dogs and children can scent a scoundrel. Education in the art of good manners kills all this later. Even when my father was overcome with drink, poor fellow, he was genial and pleasant; the only time he was in the least otherwise was the last time of all that he was in that condition—the very last time—I remember it as if it were yesterday. It was autumn; a chilly breeze had come up the river from the sea; a fire had been lighted in the drawing-room; Maggie was in bed, it was nearly nine o'clock; I was sitting up with my mother, father had gone into the town—we lived on the outskirts; I had, in my boyish way, been talking of what I had seen in London when I went up to see father's pictures at the Royal Academy; suddenly we heard voices in the hall; then the door was flung open, and a hat rolled into the room, followed by the mock-heroic exclamation, 'Whoever shall this hat displace, shall meet Bombastes face to face!' And thereupon entered my poor father, smiling cheerfully, and in dumb-show inviting sundry opponents to come and displace his hat, which rolled playfully near to the fire-

place, and there rested covered with the firelight. My little sister Meg woke up and cried lustily, my mother took the child into her arms, my father tried to kiss them both, my mother angrily repulsed him, and I shrank away behind the sofa, half afraid, half amused.

“ ‘ Won’t you speak, my chuck ; won’t you speak to its hubby ? ’ said my father ; and then he saw me, and was not pleased that I should see him in a state of intoxication. ‘ Why is not George in bed ? ’ he asked, the smile leaving his face.

“ ‘ Because he is up,’ my mother replied sharply. ‘ Left hours and hours alone, I may surely have the companionship of my own child.’

“ ‘ Hours and hours, what do you mean by hours and hours ? ’ asked my father.

“ ‘ What do I mean ? You ought to be ashamed of yourself ! ’

“ ‘ So he is ; so he is,’ said Mr. Chingford Lucas, stepping in at the half-open doorway ; ‘ but it was my fault this time. The truth is, I only arrived in Sandwich two hours ago ; was very hungry, we met by chance, and as we had a little matter of business to talk about, some pictures, a special commission from London, I asked him to dine with me, and the wine and the business together have excited him a little, that is all. I walked home with him, and should

have entered with him, but I was startled by his sudden bit of amusing theatrical business. Pray, accept my apologies, Mrs. Newbolde; and, believe me, that for this little fault of George's, I am more to blame than he is.'

" 'Come in, come in,' said my father, 'sit down, and don't apologize for me. How I came home is my affair, not yours.'

" In appearance he was, as I said before, a gentleman, this visitor of ours. For that matter, of course, my father was a gentleman; but he was not dressed so well as his companion, nor was there such a tone of authority in his voice; he wore the loose velvet jacket in which he generally painted, a pair of equally loose grey trousers, and a felt hat. My mother received the gentleman with a special show of courtesy, and my father struggled to offer him a chair.

" 'George,' said my father, taking my arm gently.

" 'Yes, father,' I said, looking up at him.

" 'Go to bed.'

" 'Yes, father,' I said, hurrying to the staircase, and then as quickly returning to kiss him. 'Good-night, father.'

" 'Good-night,' he replied, and then his voice suddenly changed as if he was going to weep, and he said again, 'Good-night, my boy.'

“My mother followed me up the stairs, but she did not come into my little room. Hurrying off my clothes, I crept into bed, hid my face in my pillow, and felt wretched. The moon shining in at one corner of the window sent a ray of light across the chamber, falling upon a chest of drawers, and mounting upwards in a long column like a ghost. I could hear the murmur of voices in the drawing-room. I prayed for my father and mother and little Meg drew the sheets more closely round me as that column of moonlight moved gradually near me along the wall, and at last fell asleep and dreamed of some strange land across the seas that washed the shores of the Sandwich country.

“I ask myself now, sitting talking to you, my dear partner, why I dwell upon these trifling details? Ask the criminal who is condemned to die why he thinks of the days of his innocence. Ask the parched traveller in the desert why he dreams of springs and green-fringed rivers. Ask the bankrupt why his mind wanders back to the well-filled coffers of the past. Ask the dying man why he thinks of those early days when he sat by his mother’s knee and listened to the sweet music of her loving voice. Ask the rich man in the burning pit why he looks up in vain at Lazarus.”

## CHAPTER IV.

"THUS BAD BEGINS, AND WORSE REMAINS BEHIND."

"NEVER," continued my host, "had these things troubled me so much as on the day after that altercation between my parents. It had dawned on me some time before that there was something wrong in our household. That humiliating exhibition of drunkenness had confirmed all my boyish doubts and fears, and had settled down into my mind like a dull, painful feeling, in which there was much sorrow and sympathy for my father. If he had not seemed ashamed, I should have thought the incident rather humorous than otherwise—a sort of thing to laugh at, not to cry about. But I had somehow seen his eye fall on me as mine used to fall, seeking the floor when convicted of some childish crime.

"I had noted my mother's angry look as well; and the words she uttered were so hard and sharp, coupled with her previous complaints of my father's conduct, that I sat and brooded over the business until it became a sort of settled sorrow.

“My father was a kind, careless, gentle man. It occurred to me often in later days that it was only since he had renewed his friendship with Mr. Lucas that he had neglected his home and become fond of wine. On the day after that disagreeable incident I have just mentioned, this Lucas called in the afternoon. He said he had the highest opinion of my father, but thought it a pity he should frequent the Norfolk Hotel so much. Some people dared to say Mr. Newbolde went to see the young ladies there, but of course this was not true. I remember that my mother shook her head and sighed, and then told me I had better go and look after my little sister. Mr. Lucas patted me on the head; I shivered at his touch. He thrust half a crown into my hand; I threw it away.

“Nothing could have induced me to like him, and my mother was very angry with me when I said he was a disagreeable and hateful man. She said she was a persecuted, unhappy woman, and that nobody took her part.

“I can see her now, with her dark hair falling in curls upon her shoulders, sitting rocking herself to and fro before a pier-glass, with little Maggie playing at her feet, and myself sitting by her and wondering at all the mysteries of her toilet.

"She was a pretty woman, as I have said. My father, in the early days of their marriage, had painted her in various characters. She sat before her glass often and dressed her hair in a dozen different ways, and asked Maggie how she liked mamma best—with flowers in her hair or without. As for me, I received but little evidence of her affection. I sometimes think she was jealous of the love I felt for my father, and resented the undisguised dislike which I showed for Mr. Lucas, who was, she said, 'so kind to George,' and brought him 'so many useful commissions from London.' There were occasions when she would talk with me and appear to give me her confidence. I was what the vicar, who visited us very often, called an old boy."

"You dislike the Church, but you always speak gently of the vicar," I said, desirous of drawing him out a little in regard to the author of the first part of this general history.

"Ah, yes," he said; "the vicar was more than a parson—he was a man. Next to my father and Maggie I loved him."

"But you loved your mother at some time," I suggested.

"Yes," he said, "and admired her."

“Why not think of her as always belonging to that time? Why not think of her at her best, when—”

“Because her worst,” he exclaimed angrily, “overshadows all the good. Ah, you don’t know what you are saying. That vicar could tell you; and he shall if he be alive. He had a heart as big as his parish. He would come and sit in my father’s studio and talk of art in such a simple way that even I seemed to understand him. Maggie would climb on his knee and listen, especially when he talked of flowers and the wonders of nature; and he would break off at the height of some discourse touching chiaroscuro and the effects of lights and shadows, to tell Maggie and me the story of the birth of the dragon-fly.”

I might stop him to say that I have noted his mark in “A Tour round my Garden,” at the chapter on dragon-flies, and his memorandum, “See the Water-Babies.”

Kingsley has, perhaps, described the metamorphosis of the grub that breaks out into sunny splendour more graphically than Alphonse Karr. But I say nothing; the time to speak is not opportune, though my fancy travels back, through the rain, and far away to the vicar’s house, and I see in imagination

blue and golden wings hovering over the reeds by the rivulet that skirts his garden and then dives under his dining-room, to dart out again, fresh and free, on its way to join the tidal stream beyond.

These thoughts occupy me for a time while I am still listening to my host's narrative; they crop up and hover in my mind like a dragon-fly of memory, as it were, lingering on the river of life.

"Poor old vicar!" went on my host; "he did his best for all of us, and was especially kind to me in the darkest hours of my life. Whenever I talked to my mother in those last days that I saw her, she would always come back, whatever the subject, to complaints of my father's neglect; and then a cloud seemed to fall upon me, and presentiments of evil. For many days after that night, when my father sent me to bed, there was a sort of general warfare going on between my unhappy parents. One night, however, the storm burst furiously, and that long after I was a-bed. I heard my mother say she was deceived—her husband was a drunkard and a beggar. My father rejoined that his wife was a frivolous, silly woman, who thought more about the fashion of her ribbons than the regulation of her household.

"Oh! how I prayed to heaven that peace would come to these people, my parents. How I buried

my head in the pillows and sobbed, and longed to throw myself between them and help them to forgive each other!

“The vicar prayed to this end, I am sure; but it was of no more avail, look you, than the prayers of the Pilgrim Fathers who came to New England to worship righteously and according to the Word. Do you know the history of this great America? Just read about the landing at Plymouth Rock, and you will see how the poor people died like sheep—prayed for life, and died, starved with cold, eaten up with disease. Where is Mr. Read and his theory in that case?”

He asked me this question with a sneer.

“The great and grand results,” I said, “are patent to the humblest intellect.”

“Well, well, be it so,” he said, “since I too look forward still. But do you wonder that I stand here for Justice, do you wonder that I dream of revenge, that I think of it, and count upon it, and sometimes get it to the full in my dreams—but only in my dreams—do you wonder? Then let me go on with the history of the account, for the settlement of which Fate is my debtor.

“For many days after that afternoon visit of this Mr. Lucas, I would go continually to my father’s

*"Bad begins, and Worse remains behind."* 163

studio, and sit there silently watching his unavailing efforts to settle down to his work. One day Mr. Lucas came in and gave my father a newspaper, which he read and then handed to me.

"'Take that to your mother, George,' he said, 'and tell her to read it.'

"It was a copy of a London morning paper containing a flattering notice of one of my father's pictures which had been hung at the Royal Academy.

"'Oh, yes, I know all about it,' said my mother, 'Mr. Lucas told me of it. Your father should be very much obliged to him for his kindness.'

"Susan Copley was a favourite servant of my mother. One day my father was sent for to London on a matter of business. A circus had come to Sandwich. My mother gave permission for Susan to take us to see the riders.

"When we were ready to go, she greatly astonished me by taking me into her arms and kissing me so fondly that I couldn't help thinking my prayers of the night before had been answered. When she kissed Maggie, and asked Susan to take care of her, there were tears in her eyes, and the expression of her face seemed to settle into my heart and make it ache. But this soon passed away in the joy of her fervent kiss, and the new sensation of being sent out

to be amused and made happy. In later days, in the Old World and in this wild new part of it, I have been to see the riders, that my memory of dishonour and my title to vengeance might not die out. I have been to the circus, as it were to take a voluntary turn upon the rack; to be broken on the wheel of my memory; to suffer and grow strong. I daresay you, dear old partner, have sat in a circus and seen the clown tumble, and may have laughed with the children as I laughed when I was a boy; but to me that scene now always fills my ears with sobs that are louder than the laughs. On that night, years ago, while I was applauding the pranks of the clown, Fate was preparing for me such a future as few could have lived through and kept their senses.

“When Maggie and I reached home with Susan after the circus, the house was in disorder; the fires had gone out, the candles were not lighted, and the place was as still as death. I remember grasping Susan by the arm and asking her what was the matter. She did not answer, but lighted the candles and went straight to my mother’s room, which was strewn with litter. There was a letter on the dressing-table for my father; I learnt this afterwards. Susan put Maggie to bed in the next room and hushed her to sleep. My sister was tired with laughing, and

worn out with the wonderful performances at the circus; she was soon fast asleep.

"‘Mamma,’ I cried. ‘Mother, where are you?’

"‘Don’t make a noise,’ said Susan; ‘she has gone away.’

"While I, her son, was revelling in the quips and cranks of the clown, and falling into a boyish passion of love for the young lady who sprang through paper hoops, and leaped over yards of blue silk, while my father was on his way home from London, while the chaste moon was shining upon Sandwich, my mother was deserting her home, her husband, and her children, for ever; deserting all, perjuring her soul, blackening the innocent names of her offspring, for a cruel, designing villain."

## CHAPTER V.

## A SAD HOME-COMING.

“THE next day the town rang with the news. ‘Pretty Mrs. Newbolde has eloped with that swell Lucas.’ Sandwich could hardly remember when it had had such a sensation.

“I heard Susan Copley say to the grocer’s wife, ‘What could master expect? He never paid missus any attention. Never took her nowhere, not so much as to the Kent county ball, which she had invitations for, as I see ’em myself. Always either painting or drunk, either nipping at the tavern or going off on the spree to London. What, I says, could master expect, and his wife so pretty, and so miserable?’

“‘But think of the children,’ the grocer’s wife observed; ‘think of them; they bain’t to blame, surely, Susan, and they ought to have been considered, the girl especially, not as I ever cared for the boy; but for all that she was his mother.’

“‘That’s true for you,’ said Susan, ‘and I’m sure she cried as if her ’art was broke afore she went,

you'd ha' thought as she was bein' driven out instead of going of her own free will.'

"'But why didn't you stop her, Susan?'

"'I stop her! How could I, marm, when she sent me to the circus with the children, and Mary, the cook, out for a holiday to see her old mother at Ramsgate, that artful was she.'

"'But I thought you said she cried as she were a-going?' said the grocer's wife.

"'Lor', marm, that were when she kissed the children afore we went to the circus, and she was that fretful all day there was no barin' with her.'

"'You knowd as she was a-going, Susan.'

"'I won't say as I did, and I won't say as I didn't,' she answered, 'but I will repeat as what could master expect coming home drunk and a-going on like a common pussun, with his wife a lady, and that 'andsome gent a-coming visiting as knowed her afore, and was her lover, and would ha' married her if master hadn't been fust hand with him, which such is life, say what you will; and I 'opes as I may never be tempted in the same way.'

"It was a lovely July day. All the windows were open. All the rooms, it seemed to me, were full of people. Nobody noticed me much. I wandered about, and heard the news of the day from

every point of view. Everybody kissed and nursed Maggie. I evaded the general touch, the patronizing compassion.

“‘How do you know, Susan,’ I heard the vicar say, ‘that they have gone away together?’”

“‘I know it, sir,’ she answered, ‘too well, and that’s all I can say.’”

“‘Did your mistress say so?’”

“‘As good as.’”

“‘As good as! but what did she say?’”

“‘She was sick of her life, and couldn’t bear master’s goings on.’”

“‘But about going away. Did this person, Mr. Chingford Lucas, say anything to you?’”

“‘No answer.’”

“‘Question repeated.’”

“‘Still no answer.’”

“‘Do you hear what I say?’”

“‘Yes, your reverence.’”

“‘I am a magistrate, remember; and this unhappy business may not end here. Did he give you money?’”

“‘Susan burst into tears.’”

“‘Did he give you money?’ the vicar asked again.

“‘Yes, sir, he did.’”

“ ‘How much?’

“ ‘Ten pounds.’

“ ‘And you sold yourself, your good master, and your foolish mistress, for ten pounds, eh? Is that so?’

“ ‘If you put it that way,’ she replied, blubbering; ‘but it was missus’s wish.’

“ ‘And yet you say she cried as if she was forced to go.’

“ ‘No, sir, I never said such a thing.’

“ ‘You said so to Mrs. Smith, the grocer’s wife.’

“ ‘Never, sir, I’ll swear it afore a judge and jury!’ she exclaimed.

“ ‘You are a wicked woman!’ said the vicar, ‘and if you had happened to live in my grandfather’s time, they would have given you a taste of the ducking-stool, and served you right.’

“ ‘Oh, sir,’ she blubbered, ‘I wish as I were dead!’

“ ‘It would have been as well, perhaps, if you had wished so a week since and had your wish granted; but the wishes of the ungodly do not prevail; go away, you are a shameless, good-for-nothing creature!’

“ ‘A reporter came along to collect information for a local newspaper.

“ ‘Come home with me,’ said the vicar to the

gentleman of the press: 'you must not print all the foolish gossip you may hear about this affair. There may be no truth in the story at all. But come with me, and I will advise you as to what you should write about it, if it is desirable that you should write anything.'

"As the vicar was leaving the house I followed him.

" 'Do you really think, Mr. Vicar,' I said, 'that there is no truth in it—that mamma will come back?'

" 'Ah, my dear George, I wondered what had become of you,' said the vicar.

" 'I was standing near you,' I said.

" 'Excuse me one moment,' said the vicar to the reporter.

"Then taking me aside, he said,—

" 'My dear little friend—I may call you friend, eh?—and you will always think of me as your friend, your nearest and dearest friend, next to your father, eh?'

"He spoke very gently, and held my little hand in his great one.

" 'Yes, vicar, thank you,' I said.

" 'Well, then, be very brave. Your father will come home soon. It is now eleven, he will be at the station at half-past. Go you, and meet him, and bring him to me—will you?'

“ ‘Yes, vicar,’ I said.

“ ‘And say, “Father, you are to come with me straight to Vicar Oliphant’s before you go home, it is very important he should see you.” ’

“ ‘Yes, vicar.’

“ ‘And then lead him to me, like this, do you understand?’ He led me a little way to indicate loving firmness of manner.

“ ‘Yes, vicar,’ I said.

“ ‘That’s all right; I will depend upon you. Good-bye, then, until you come with your father; go straight to the station now.’

“ I did.

“ The English stations are different to the depôts in America, as you know. We have neat brick houses and covered platforms. Some of them are gay with flowers. Most of them have book-stalls, similar to those on the Elevated Road of New York. The station I went to was away in some meadows. It had a book store, and there were plants and flowers in its windows. The fields right and left were sunny. One of them was a hayfield. The grass had just been cut. Young larks were flying about in it. Another meadow was green with the aftermath. It was separated from the hayfield by a ditch that was full of water, and had reeds on each side, reeds and meadow-

sweet, and there were dragon-flies darting hither and thither, and gay moths. I sat down and watched them, and waited for the train. To this day I can see that picture, every detail of it; I can smell the meadow-sweet, and see the reflection of the reeds in the water.

“The train came in presently, and with it my father. He had not looked so well for a long time, and he was in high spirits.

“‘Why, George!’ he exclaimed, stooping down to kiss me; ‘that’s a good fellow to come and meet me; but how did you know I should come by this train?’

“‘The vicar said so,’ I replied, taking his hand.

“‘Oh, so he has been to see you! that’s right—dear old vicar. I don’t know what we should do without him. Ah, there’s my bag. Porter, send my bag up home, I shall walk.

“The porter touched his hat, and took up the portmanteau.

“‘Capital to walk home on such a fine day, eh, George?’

“‘Yes, father.’

“‘First rate, to get back from that dusty old city to these pleasant fields, and to have one’s son and heir to meet one, eh, George?’

“ ‘Yes, father.’

“ ‘And I’ve brought very good news, George, very good ; such a commission ! But first, how is mamma ? Well, of course ? ’

“He did not wait for me to reply, but went on chatting.

“ ‘Mamma shall have such a new dress, and such a pair of diamond ear-rings ! George, I am going to tell you something.’

“He paused and looked around as if he were about to tell me a great secret.

“ ‘Yes, father.’

“ ‘I don’t think I have been quite so good a father to you all as I might be ; but—’

“ ‘Oh, father ! ’ I exclaimed, and I began to cry, for it seemed to me, boy as I was, that his words were so out of gear with the tidings the vicar had for him that his poor heart must break when he should learn what had happened.

“ ‘Hullo ! ’ he said. ‘Pooh, pooh, George ; don’t cry about it. I have not been such a ruffian as all that.’

“ ‘Oh, no, no ; but I do love you so much, father,’ I said, checking my tears.

“ ‘God bless you ! ’ he said, stooping once more to kiss me. ‘Well, I have resolved, George, to be such

a good father as never was heard of. No more wine at all, George—you know what I mean, don't you?—and the nation has bought that picture with you and Maggie in it. There, what do you think of that, you rascal? And the commission—what do you think it is? To paint the Royal Wedding for Windsor Castle. There!—is that not good news?’

“‘Yes, father.’

“‘Yes, father,’ he said, mocking me in a cheery way; ‘I should think it is. And I and your mother will have to go to London and stay for a long while, and perhaps you and Maggie may come also. I shall have sittings from all the royalties and great people, George; and all their grand dresses will be sent to the studio—a London studio, George. And won't that delight mamma, eh?’

“‘This way, father,’ I said, pressing his hand; ‘this way.’

“‘No, this is the shortest. I don't want to go into the town,’ he said.

“‘The vicar wants to see you,’ pulling his arm in the direction that led away from the old house.

“‘Well, by-and-by,’ he replied, resisting

“‘No, now, father—before you go home,’ I said.

“‘Why?’ he asked, looking down at me.

“ ‘He will tell you, father,’ I said, and the tears would be checked no longer; I clasped his hand with both of mine and laid my face on it, and sobbed as if my heart was breaking.

“ ‘Why, great God!’ he exclaimed; ‘what has happened, George?’

“ ‘My only answer was to pull him in the direction of the vicar’s house.

“ ‘What is it, George, my dear fellow? My dear boy, what is it?’

“ ‘The vicar will tell you,’ I said, between my sobs.

“ ‘Did he send you to meet me?’

“ ‘Yes, father, dear.’

“ ‘He spoke no more, but went with me to the vicar’s house.’”

## CHAPTER VI.

“FOUND DROWNED,” AND A VOW OF VENGEANCE.

“IT was a pitiable sight to see my father,” continued my host, after a pause, “a pitiable sight. He was torn with alternate fits of rage and sorrow, of weeping and cursing, of morbid sobriety and wild drunkenness. Now he would fall back on his pride and profess not to be troubled; then he would upbraid himself; then he would upbraid my mother. Never once did he mention the name of Lucas—not in my hearing.

“The blow at his peace was all the harder that it occurred when he was full of good intentions, and when the greatest happiness seemed within his reach. Never put any confidence in to-morrow, Hickory. ‘Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow you die,’ is one of the scriptural things you may hold on to. My father came home joyful, a changed man, with a great ambition. Concurrent with the delight of an unexpected success were his schemes for making his wife happy—fine dresses, diamond ear-rings, a

long visit to London. He was very happy—too happy; so he was struck down, his hope and ambition, his good intentions, his kindly programme all beaten out of him. In the darkness of the time he fondled Maggie and clung to me. We walked about the garden with him, Maggie taking one hand, I the other. The vicar would come daily—hourly almost—to help us comfort our father.

“Susan Copley begged on her knees not to be sent away, and was forgiven. The vicar made her confess all, and the story developed a carefully-planned and cruel conspiracy on the part of Lucas.

“My father broke down at last under the weight of his trouble. He was more frequently at last to be found at the ‘Kent Arms’ than at home. As the autumn approached the winter months, the house grew more and more lonely. The leaves fell from the trees earlier than usual; nipping frosts destroyed the flowers; the wind came sighing up the river; the ivy flapped in a ghostly way at the window-panes at night. I think that from about eleven years of age I grew to be twenty in one month—twenty in feelings, twenty in melancholy.

“Susan Copley, being unable to read or write, had concentrated what little intellect and imagination she possessed on omens and presentiments.

“ ‘I know as something else’s going to happen,’ she said. ‘I see a funeral in the candle last night as I was going to bed—and the last time as I see one my mother died. This morning, afore it was light, I ’eard death-ticks, and I was that frightened I thought I should have to a got up and waked the cook.’

“ One might easily have had forebodings of ill in that old house, in those sad days of autumn. To know what had passed, to see my father’s hopeless condition, was to have evil presentiments about the future. I had them, heaven knows. It seemed to me as if the wind roaring up the river had them; as if the paint hardened in patches of colour on my father’s palette had them; and his draped wooden model, that stood by the old fireplace in the studio seemed to have a warning finger continually pointing towards the river. What a desolate house it was! —and is, I believe; and is. I have seen it once since I left the town for good. Yes; and I shall see it once again.

“ And it was not for nothing the wind sighed, the ivy tapped at the windows, the candles guttered, the death-spiders ticked, and the dumb, draped figure pointed its wooden finger to the river.

“ ‘Mister Newbolde’s found drowned!’ shouted a

boyish voice one first day of November, just as Susan was telling me at breakfast that father had not been home all night; 'and they've took him to the "Kent Arms" to 'ole a hinqest on him.'

"Susan Copley fainted; the cook brought her to with burnt feathers; and Maggie, more frightened at this business than the news, began to cry. I put my arms around her and soothed her. I couldn't cry, and didn't for many a long day.

"They were carrying him into the 'Kent Arms' (the house was in a different parish) as I reached the door; carrying him in on a shutter, all wet, his poor dead hand that I had held so often swinging between the bearers. There was a wound on his forehead, his clothes were torn, and his poor dear eyes were wide open.

"It needs the memory of that awful sight to nerve my resolution sometimes.

"They tried to exclude me from the room where the inquest was held; but I fought and struggled, and the vicar interposed.

"'I am no child,' I said; 'I am a man, and I shall not cry, and I am not afraid, but I must hear all they say.'

"'You shall, my son, and you shall sit by me,' said the vicar.

“I had heard it was really thought my father had been murdered.

“‘And if he has,’ Susan Copley had exclaimed in my presence, ‘that villain have done it, for I’ll swear I see him last night as I was a puttin’ the drawin’-room shutters to. Didn’t I say so, cook?’

“‘You said as you thought you’d seen a ghost, and ’twas like Mister Lucas in a clergyman’s coat.’

“The evidence showed that the poor dear fellow had left the inn, where he was now lying dead, at about nine o’clock, to go home. The barmaid said he was a little ‘the worse for liquor;’ the landlord said in his opinion he was not; two workmen said when crossing the bridge at seven in the morning they see a body lying partly in the water, partly on the bank, as if the tide had left it. The head and shoulders were in the water; it was close by the bridge, and just below the place where a piece of the rail of the bridge had been broken. Was it freshly broken? they were asked. Yes, they said, but they had noticed it was broken the day before. Medical evidence was given that the wound on the head might have been the result of a blow with a blunt instrument, or it might have been the result of a fall against the timbers of the bridge close by which the body was lying. There were two theories to account

for death. The first, that the poor fellow, being intoxicated, had fallen into the river at the place where the bridge was damaged, that in falling his clothes had caught in the rail and been torn, that striking the water at the point where the bridge was braced with iron timbers he had struck his head, and being stunned, had rolled into the river and was drowned. What was he doing on the bridge? was one of the questions that cropped up, seeing that he was going home, and the bridge did not lead homewards. This was answered by the suggestion that he might have been going to the ‘Mariner’s Inn,’ which was situated on the other side of the river, as he had been known to go there on several occasions lately after nine o’clock.

“‘But, Mr. Coroner,’ said the vicar, ‘with all due respect to your honourable court, and by your leave, there is a witness who heard voices and a cry of “Oh! you ruffian,” near the bridge last night.’

“‘Indeed,’ said the coroner, ‘then by all means let him come forward and be sworn.’

“Thereupon the porter who had carried my father’s bag from the station pushed his way through the crowd, and stated that the last train having come in, he was going home—he lived down on the other side of the river, about half a mile below the bridge—and

he heard voices, but thought nothing of it, and shouldn't have done now, only when he heard that Mr. Newbolde was drowned, and had a cut on his forehead, he bethought himself that one of the two who seemed to be scuffling said, 'Oh! you ruffian,' and then he heard no more. The night was very dark, the tide was running out, and it was a little after nine o'clock.

"No other evidence was offered, and the jurymen were talking and arguing with each other over the porter's statement.

"'Will they not call Susan?' I asked the vicar; 'she has something to say.'

"'Has she, my dear boy? What has she to say?'

"'That she saw Lucas look into the drawing-room window last night.'

"'Indeed, indeed!' he said; 'I hadn't heard of that; is that so?'

"'Yes, yes,' I said quickly.

"'Will you forgive me once more, Mr. Coroner? I know I have no right to speak, but I also know that you desire to sift this painful affair to the utmost.'

"'Go on, Mr. Vicar, I will gladly hear you.'

"'Is it your intention to call Susan Copley?'

"'Mr. Constable, where are you?'

“ ‘Here, sir’

“ ‘Is Susan Copley a witness?’

“ ‘No, sir.’

“ ‘Would you like her to be called, Mr. Vicar?’  
asked the coroner.

“ ‘Yes, Mr. Coroner. I believe she has made a statement to the effect that a certain person, not quite a stranger, was in the town last night, and this, coupled with the evidence of Henry Jones, the railway porter, might, perhaps, influence the verdict of the jury.’

“ ‘Call Susan Copley,’ said the coroner.

“ ‘Susan Copley,’ shouted half a dozen voices;  
but no Susan Copley responded.

“ ‘She is at the house, perhaps,’ I whispered to the vicar; and he offered the same suggestion to the coroner.

“ ‘Let Susan Copley be sent for,’ said the coroner.  
‘Meanwhile the depositions can be read over to the witnesses and signed.’

“Then there ensued a monotonous repetition of the evidence read out to the witnesses by the clerk, and in the midst of which Susan Copley entered the court.

“ ‘Take the book,’ said the coroner’s clerk.

“ ‘Yes, sir.’

“‘The evidence you shall give to the court touching the death of Edward Barnes Newbolde shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God,’ said the clerk, or words to that effect.

“‘Yes, sir.’

“‘Kiss the book,’ said the clerk. ‘You know what an oath is?’

“‘Yes, sir,’ she said, and kissed the Testament.

“‘Then tell us, my good woman,’ said the coroner, ‘what you know about the unfortunate death of your master.’

“‘Yes, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury,’ she said, looking first at the coroner and then at the jury, with a calm but very white face. ‘I know that he did it.’

“‘That he did it?’ repeated the coroner; ‘who did what?’

“‘That Mr. Lucas killed my master,’ she said.

“‘Stop, stop,’ said the coroner, ‘what do you mean; do you mean to say you saw the deed committed?’

“‘Not exactly that, but I as good as see it; leastwise, if I had I couldn’t be more certain; for he was that base he would stick at nothing; didn’t he get the poor master to sign away all his property to

missus? and I saw him last night between eight and nine a lookin' into our windows; and, oh, good gentlemen, my master's bin murdered, and it's me as ought to be hanged for it; and there's his dirty money, as is burning my pocket out and scorching my soul to pieces.'

"She flung a ten-pound note upon the table, and covered her face with her hands, rocked herself to and fro, and moaned. The court was still as death. The jurymen looked at each other. The crowd gaped open-mouthed at Susan. The coroner wiped his spectacles. I clutched the vicar's hand, my heart beating wildly.

" 'This is very extraordinary,' said the coroner. 'Compose yourself, Susan Copley, compose yourself, and sit down.'

"Then began a very lengthened examination of Susan, which led to an exhaustive deposition, the points of which were a matter of suspicion that Chingford Lucas, who had destroyed the peace of our house, had been seen in Sandwich about the period of the death of my father, and that he had a possible interest in his death, if he controlled Mrs. Newbolde, in whose favour settlements had been made, as alleged by Susan Copley.

" 'Can I give evidence?' I remember asking, as

if I were speaking in a dream. It seemed to me as if the sting and the truth had been taken out of Susan's statement by the time that it was read over to her; she had had to admit her omens and presentiments and ghosts; and her declaration that she knew Lucas had killed my father was not written down at all. What could I know about what was legal evidence and what was not? I only felt that while they were writing the criminal was escaping. So I stood up. 'Can I give evidence?'

"'Are you the deceased gentleman's son?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'My dear young friend, we are all deeply grieved for you, and, of course, will hear anything you may say, but perhaps the vicar or your poor father's solicitor will advise you.'

"'The vicar did not speak. I looked round at him, and it seemed as if he left me to my own judgment.

"'Thank you, sir, for being sorry, but I want justice. My father has been murdered by that man Lucas. Send and have him arrested.'

"'Ah, my young friend is saying what he does not quite understand,' said the coroner.

"'He has stolen my mother, murdered my father; and some day, by God's help, I will kill him.'

· “I said by God’s help, I remember, out of deference to the vicar ; a curious sort of notion, but true to my feelings at the time, which seemed to struggle to give an assurance to my father that he should not go unavenged. I wanted to register a vow, and had no right method to go upon ; but I said what was in my mind, and sat down.

“ ‘Amen,’ said a voice in the crowd ; ‘and I hope you will live to do it, youngster.’

## CHAPTER VII.

“THE DAY WILL COME.”

“NOTHING came of all this,” continued my host, “nothing, except that Mr. Chingford Lucas offered himself to the police for public or private examination, threatened Susan Copley with an action for criminal libel, and became entirely master of the situation.

“He committed these audacities through his solicitors in London, and at the same time proposed to take me under his protection. The lawyer who had advised my father on such small legal matters as belonged to our family affairs, had a long correspondence with Lucas’s solicitors. Lucas was living on the Continent, they said, but they were prepared to produce him at any moment.

“The vicar, by his own motive, had a detective down from Scotland Yard, but he could not collect evidence enough to venture upon any charge against Lucas, who, on the statement of Susan Copley getting wind, had at once given the coroner what were

regarded as ample proofs that he was in Florence at the time in question. The truth is, we were nowhere, though the vicar, the last time I saw him, six years ago, was of my opinion that this ruffian Lucas murdered my father."

"What, then, was the ultimate verdict of the jury?" I asked.

"Found drowned!" he answered; "what they call an open verdict."

"The old house, where we had all been so happy and so miserable, blossomed into auction posters. They filled the windows, and were stuck upon the walls. One day a crowd of people came and entered into possession of the place, and the vicar took Maggie and me to his house. Susan went with us; but she was curious about the auction sale. She passed most of the day going to and fro between the vicar's house and the Manse, that she might tell us what the things sold for. Poor little Maggie! she did not realize the misery of what was going on. I felt beaten down and helpless.

"In the afternoon I took Maggie out for a walk, towards the railway station; it was an early day in spring, and the world was full of promise of fruits and flowers, orchards in blossom, marsh marigolds gilding the landscape.

“As we returned to the vicar’s, we met porters and others carrying to their homes and shops, and to the railway, pieces of furniture and bric-à-brac they had bought at the sale by auction of ‘the late Mr. Newbolde’s effects.’ One man carried a picture, another a pair of vases, a third had in his arms an old-fashioned chair from my own bedroom. Then came a cartload of things, household goods, and I turned away and went across the fields, down by the river, and over the bridge; *that* bridge which I hope to cross once again. Well, on the other side of the river I met a fisherman, who talked to us, and moved thereto by something I said, he remarked that I was a fine spirited lad, and that if I was not so much of a gentleman he would give me two shillings a week and my living to help him with his nets, and go out fishing with him. I said I was not such a gentleman as he thought, and I would take his offer.

“When we went back to the vicar’s, I told his reverence what the fisherman had proposed, and what I had done; and he said I was a brave lad, and that there was nothing like self-reliance. By all means, he said, I was to take the fisherman’s offer; he was the greatest gentleman, he said, who was not ashamed of earning an honest living; the sea was a noble calling, he said, but I was never to forget that he,

the vicar, was my friend and guardian—self-elected, he said, 'but your guardian and Maggie's, and your true friend always.' I have never forgotten his kind words. 'You are not rich,' he said, 'my dear boy, and it has pleased the Lord to afflict your youth with a great sorrow; but He has given you a brave heart, and your first step in this new and sad life is honourable to your head and heart.'

And so I went, and became boy to Digges the fisherman and his boat *The Fair Aline*. It was a great change of life, and fare, but it helped me from thinking too much, and it made me strong. The vicar kept Maggie, and I do not know what became of the woman Susan. I went to see Maggie every Sunday, and to spend the day at the vicarage, as people called it, out of compliment; for the vicar had no cure of souls in Sandwich, he lived there, and preached in a church some miles away. He used to give me bits of Latin exercises to chew over in my leisure moments, and to keep me from thinking too much, or brooding on my misery. But nothing would shut out from me the memory of that dead face with the scar on its forehead; nothing could make me forget the thief who had stolen away my mother; nothing could shake my vow of revenge. 'Oh that I were a man!' was one of my constant

wishes, 'But the day will come,' one of my most consoling reflections. I think much of my sorrow for my father was sopped up in my hope of vengeance. People talk of not looking to have old heads on young shoulders; but they talk ignorantly; let them go among the poor and miserable, they will find plenty of old heads on young shoulders. Experience is age, not years always, and some boys of twelve and fifteen have seen more of life, and felt more of its responsibilities, than some men of fifty.

"What an awful life my boy's life was! What an awful life is my manhood! I am not thirty, yet I feel that I might be any age, that I might be the Wandering Jew, an outcast, a vagrant, a drunkard, a madman—yet always with a mission. I am waiting until I meet that fiend of my boyhood. When he crosses my path, or I his, then will be enacted a just retribution. And the time is coming sooner than he thinks.

"I had to cross that bridge continually going to the vicar's and to the cottage of old Digges, and I could never shut out that picture of the sad November morning, and I saw it continually in sunshine and in shadow.

"One Sunday when I went to the vicarage, his

reverence met me with a most pained and anxious expression of face.

"What is wrong, vicar?"

"Have you seen Maggie?" he asked, answering my question with another.

"Seen her, no!" I exclaimed; "not since last Sunday."

"She has gone away," he said.

"Gone away? Where? How? When?"

"On Friday evening," he said, "my housekeeper went out to see a friend; she was not away more than half an hour. I was in the library; Maggie was in her room, as we thought. Old Sarah, my housekeeper, however, came to me to see if Maggie was with me; an hour later she came to say she feared something had happened to Maggie—she had gone! I concluded that Maggie had gone into some neighbour's house, though she was not in the habit of doing so, being so young, and I sent out to inquire after her. Nobody had seen her. We sent round to old Digges's cottage. The fisherman was out with his boat, you with him. No tidings of her all night; you had not returned; our only hope was in you—we thought she might be with you and Digges. It was a forlorn hope; but we clung to it. All day yesterday there was a hue and cry

out—no trace of her. My neighbours wanted me to have the river dragged, but I gave no orders to that effect. The river has, nevertheless, been dragged ; still no Maggie, and in this instance I say, thank God !

“I sat down in the vicar’s hallway. The bells of Sandwich were chiming for morning service. A thrush was singing joyously in an old elm in the vicar’s garden.

“‘Keep a good heart, my dear boy ; God’s will be done. My theory is that Mr. Chingford Lucas has stolen her for your mother. Probably this scoundrel will marry your mother now. He will thus control what money she possesses. Your father settled upon her everything he had in the world, furniture, pictures, life insurance, and some shares in the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.’

“While we were talking a telegraph messenger came up the garden path.

“‘The Rev. Mr. Oliphant,’ he said.

“‘That is my name,’ responded the vicar.

“‘Telegram—five shillings for messenger, Sandwich office being closed.’

“‘Very well,’ said the vicar, handing the boy the money and me the telegram.

"I opened it, and read—

"'From Mrs. Newbolde, London.

"'Maggie is with me; we are now starting for Vienna; she will be well cared for and educated; she is the one comfort I need; thank you for all your kindness to her. She sends her love, and is very happy to be once more with her mother.'

"'As I thought,' said the vicar; 'your mother no doubt made it a condition of her remaining with Lucas that Maggie should be restored to her; a condition of marriage, perhaps, who knows? Or a condition of executing deeds in his favour. Who can tell?'

"'Do you believe this telegram?' I asked.

"'Yes; but of course he wrote it, or dictated it.'

"Sandwich gossiped about this new incident in the history of the Newboldes. The women said it was a good thing for the child that her mother had sent for her. The men said Lucas was an infernal scoundrel, and that he would come to a bad end. They said nothing ill of my mother, out of respect for me, I suppose; and it was not until afterwards that I came to fully understand how cruelly she had behaved. Not a message for me; not a word, not a line; she left me alone in the world, without a future. If Maggie had remained to me, I could have striven, and fought, and worked for her. To

be her protector and shield, would have represented to me all that is noble in ambition. But if Fate, or the Providence you believe in, has had a hand in this, I conclude that it was so ordained that I might have but one thing in life to accomplish—the avenging of my father's downfall and death.

“Left alone in the world, I accepted the shelter of Vicar Oliphant's kindly roof; boy as I was, I had resisted the offer of this hospitality when I felt that I ought to work for Maggie. But this last stay to my poor existence gone, I braced myself up for the work that was before me. To enable me to hold my own in the contest with Lucas, I felt that it was necessary to educate both mind and body, to cultivate the one, to train the other, to make myself if possible an athlete body and soul, to be skilled in intellectual fence, and to be capable physically. During the last two or three years I have strained the capacity of the fine constitution thus laid down, taxed it to the utmost with the fatigues of manual labour and the poison of drink.

“Ah, if things had been different with me! Now and then the quiet of the vicar's cultivated home stole into my soul, and I had dreams of forgetfulness. The vicar led me with a gentle hand and a mind stored with knowledge through the classic paths of

the Latin poets; we read philosophy together, and we studied the natural history of books and of nature. I became, the vicar said, quite a scholar, and the local fishermen said I could sail a boat with the best of them. So far the training of my body has been of the most practical service to me, though I have found comfort in books. I have had more opportunities to test the strength of my hands than the culture of my brain; and the nautical knowledge I picked up among the Sandwich and Deal fishermen has served me in good stead more than once.

“I have many a time exclaimed with *Hamlet*—

“‘The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right.’

There is, I know, a wild egotism in this parallel; yet my wrongs are to my mind as deep and wide, as all-absorbing as his—a father murdered, a mother fled with the assassin; nay, I count myself as the most wronged of the two, and this you will think is egotism gone mad. So it may be for aught I know; but, oh, heavens! had I had the opportunities for a quick vengeance that *Hamlet* had, the slayer of my father’s peace, the assassin of my father’s life, would not have lived to strut through a five-act play.

“Poor *Hamlet*! Do you know I have pitied him as if he had really lived, aye, and as if I had known

him, for look you, a fellow-feeling has hooks of steel to hang one's thoughts upon other's woes. Mad ! They say Hamlet was mad ; he was just as mad as I am, just as mad as any other man would be under the same circumstances. It is not necessary to be a prince, or a scholar, or a dreamer, or well brought up, or carefully nurtured ; or in good society, as the fools in London call mixing with snobs and tuft-hunters ; you could feel as Hamlet felt about the murder of his father if you were a peasant of the fields, a miner in the Rockies, a fisherman, a sailor, a thing that Society wipes its feet upon, and will not allow to have a soul to be saved, except under the patronage of a Church.

“ When I think of these things, I scorn your clerical arrangements and all that they profess to lead up to. I defy them and all the rules and regulations man has made to exalt money above life ; and I lay my ear to the earth as the Indian does to listen for the steps of the enemy he has doomed.

“ The vicar sent a private detective on the track of Lucas, and he brought report of him and my mother, and Maggie, at one time in London, at another in Paris, and at another in Vienna. My old friend did not give me details, but he satisfied himself that Maggie was really with her mother, in

good health, and evidently happy. And then the days went on, and the weeks and months; I studied hard, and in three years' time was learned in many things. Nobody came to live in the old Manse. The vicar obtained permission to attend to the garden, and after a time, when I had mastered my feelings sufficiently to go there with him, we used to spend some hours there every week, digging, raking, planting, and keeping the sweet memory of the dear old home green. He little thought how these visits also kept green the wounds in my heart. I kept all that to myself; and one day, when I found my affections twining themselves round about the vicar, when I found my heart softening to the past, and my mind becoming absorbed in the pleasant studies and recreations of the vicar's library, and in the sports and pastimes of field, and river, and sea, then I went out upon the bridge, reaffirmed my oath, and the next day I was far away from Sandwich. I left the vicar a few grateful words, full of grief and thanks, but also supplemented with a reference to the duty I owed to the memory of my murdered father.

"And thereupon began my pilgrimage of vengeance. I followed his trail from London to Paris; from Paris to Monaco; from Monaco to the Black

Forest. I obtained intelligence of him under various names in Milan, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. I saw him once in Paris, in a gambling-house, but only for a moment; the police had raided the house almost simultaneously with my entrance. I got in as a messenger. But why go into these details? Fate has been against me; for he could not know I was after him. He has lived a strange life—gambler, cheat, financier, spy, police agent, speculator, and his business has been in many lands. I traced him to New York, to San Francisco; then I concluded to lay by and wait. I had been a sailor, a clerk, a railway porter, and at San Francisco I fell in with a party of miners. Making a little money, I determined to make more, and to employ the sleuth-hounds of private detection to help me in my search. Sitting still set me thinking; making money set me drinking; pioneering gave me a taste for mining adventure; fighting Indians seemed to give scope for the brutality that is in my nature; I think the drink made me mad, reckless, brave, perhaps. I was another being; for a time I seemed to forget my mission; but I was only building in the foundations stronger—getting money; for money can buy allies, can multiply hands, can lengthen the reach of arms; and it came into my mind also that as I had

pretty well gone round the world after this Lucas, I would sit down, like the drunken fool in the picture, and let the world go round until he came to me. A silly idea, eh? Truly; so silly, that when I found myself entertaining it one night down at the 'Castle' bar, entertaining it, chuckling over it, and repeating it as if it were wisdom, I came to the conclusion that I was really going mad. Perhaps it was delirium tremens, I don't know. They say I picked a quarrel with Nigger Jack that night, and shot him. I don't remember it; but Nigger Jack was the terror of the Gulch, the terror of half the country this side the Rockies, for that matter, boasted that he had killed fourteen men; and it was an act of grace, a Providential thing to have him die in his boots. And as everybody gave me credit for that good action, I took it after I came to, for I was raving mad they said for a week. Lady Ann nursed me, and but for her nursing I would have died. I made a note of all this when I got well again, and reformed somewhat, took hold of myself, put on the break.

"And so, dear friend, I have waited for tidings of him. The mark of my footsteps are in many countries, and I am here, hundreds of miles from civilization, to hear of him, to find the clue. You bring me the token, with a blessing in it. I take it

on my knees with gratitude. You see I am something more than the rough, hardened, drunken brute that the Gulch thinks me. I have studied human nature, and know how to treat the rugged bear, and how to lie down with the lamb. Misfortune has taught me philosophy. Riches have been given to me, at least for her—for my sister, Maggie, and for you, my dear partner; for you, the messenger in the wilderness. As for him, we shall stand face to face again on that bridge, at midnight. I see him now, creeping in the shadow as if he feared a ghost, cowering before me, who am the image of my dead father. I cling to the motto ‘the day will come.’ ”

He was on his feet now, my host, pacing the room, clenching his right hand as if it held a dagger. I rose and stood on guard; he stopped, looked at me, and laughed wildly.

“You think I *am* mad!” he exclaimed, “and it is enough to make me crazy to think of these things, is it not? But you go crazy only when you can do nothing but think of them; the relief comes when you talk of them. When I was in San Francisco I used to go into the Chinese quarters and smoke that I might dream of them, that I might find relief in enacting my mission; but I had no dreams, and

if I had, my wildest ideas would not have brought you to me with the clue in the darkness—you with the silken thread and your love for Maggie, you with your good news and your good heart, you with your honest soul bathing in the sunshine of a pure love. Ah, I do begin to think there is a great Heavenly hand in all this. You'll find me going to church as I did when a boy, should we ever meet in a city."

Then pausing to fix his eyes upon mine, he said: "Now listen, partner—listen, Hickory Maynard! Your Fitzherbert Willoughby is my Chingford Lucas; your Margaret is my Maggie; I am George Newbolde. The only man who has any right to stand between you and this girl you love, takes your hand in his and gives his consent to your marriage."

He took my right hand in his, and laid his left hand over both.

"That man makes two easy conditions in giving that consent; he is to provide her dowry, and he is to have the pledge of your solemn oath never to reveal to her what has transpired between you and me—never to mention me or our conversation to her; and when she is your wife, you are to do your best to forget that there ever was such a person as

George Newbolde, ever such a person as 'the Boss of Drummond's Gulch.' "

"It is a hard condition," I said.

"What?"

"To carry such a secret as this through the remainder of my life. I can never forget you."

"Not forget me! I have done you no wrong, and what people call kindness is easy enough to forget. Why, I have met men who could not remember what you call an obligation for a whole day—except to resent it. Come, give me your word, I am no longer excited."

He released my hand, took my arm, and drew me to the door.

"It is a long way to England," he said; "far, far away beyond that misty river, over yonder misty mountains; and she is waiting for you there; perhaps she is in trouble, perhaps he has carried her away to some other land to hide her from you, perhaps she is in danger, a prisoner in some gloomy convent, or locked up in some London cellar; who knows what may be happening to her while we stand here miles away beyond civilization; thousands of miles of sea between us and London? What can you do without my help? Nothing, as yet. Have you money? No; for the lawyer has not yet drawn

up our agreement of partnership; the scrip of the Revenge is still in my possession. Do I ask any idle or vicious condition for my help? No. Do I put you under an obligation? No. You are engaged to marry my sister. I am her only living relation that I know of. I am rich. You honour me by desiring to become my brother-in-law. I am alone in the world, and I offer you my friendship, and invite you to become my partner. Margaret has no father. She was too young when he died to remember anything about him. She has no brother, except one whom she thinks dead. Let me be dead still to her. Why burthen her mind with my sorrows, with my troubles? Why haunt her life with my shadow, perhaps with my ghost? I am not in her world; she does not know me; I love her too much to catch from her one ray of sunshine that you and I may attract towards her. Let me have my way, brother."

He spoke in soft, appealing tones. There were accents in his voice that reminded me of her own.

"You have suffered but a short eclipse of your happiness," he went on. "You give the pledge, you swear the oath now; to-morrow we part for ever, as if we had never met, unless my story has changed your views in regard to Margaret New-

bolde. That is her name. Let it be registered in the register at Sandwich church. You will marry her there, and then leave for Italy that very day. Take her for a long, happy tour beneath sunny skies. You are surprised that I am so calm and quiet. It is the eve of the coming day. Have you ever been lost at sea, the prey of darkness, to find yourself safe at dawn off a friendly coast? That is how I feel now. Good-night, Hickory Maynard! To-morrow, good-bye! The next day, strangers—for her sake!”

“Let it be as you wish,” I answered. “I accept the conditions.”

“On your oath and on your honour?”

“On my honour and on my oath.”

Looking back to the night when these closing revelations were made to me, concluded as they were with a vow on my part and a bond on his, I do not honestly think I could possibly have acted otherwise than to accept his conditions. One is always wise after the event. I don't even now know whether I regret having given the vow. I believe I think I was right. If one through life could know the exact result of our most important actions before committing them, life would be robbed of much of its romance, possibly be less worth living than it is at present.

It was a strange thing that I should go away from the very heart of culture in London, to find a philosopher in the boss of a mining camp on the other side of the Atlantic ; not a rough materialist quoting commonplace experience, but a cultured philosopher, who might have disputed with Ruskin, or taken sides with Spencer—a mining expert and a fighter of Indians, a vagabond since a boy, and with a mission of vengeance in his heart. And yet this man had set me thinking about life and its duties, religion and its tenets, the world beyond the grave, as no teaching at Oxford had set me thinking, as no struggles for advancement in London had moved me to philosophizing.

There was, moreover, a picturesqueness of illustration in my host's narrative, an out-of-the-way expression of sentiment, a possibility of a noble career blighted, and a seeming knowledge of this in his reflection that made him very attractive to me. Moreover, the strange circumstance of that casual visit of mine to Sandwich binding my fortunes up with his as if by the direct interposition of Providence, intensified the influence which he exercised over me. I should have been inhuman to resist him, even had he not been her brother. These feelings and opinions move me now after all is over.

I am not trying to justify myself, nor to approve my conduct. Whether I did right or wrong is for others to judge. There are lives which belong to smooth rivers; there are lives that belong to rushing torrents. Fate is oftentimes too strong for the strongest will, the most calm temperament. But what a curious, complicated, strange freak of fortune it was that mixed me up with the story of that house to let at Sandwich!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MORROW AND THE PARTING.

"To-morrow, good-bye!" he had said; "the next day, strangers!"

I found myself continually repeating the words, as if I were learning them by heart—as if they were the key to some strange puzzle, the oral passport through the lines of an enemy, with the promise of freedom beyond. They haunted me.

"To-morrow, and the next day," I found myself saying to myself; "to-morrow has no next day, it has only yesterdays."

But my host's to-morrow came in due course, and when it dawned my partner, my prospective brother-in-law (shall we henceforth call him George Newbolde, for that is his proper name?), drew his bunk out of the niche in which it was packed, and from an excavation beneath he took out a bundle of owner's shares in the Revenge Silver Mine, Drummond's Gulch, Colorado.

I noticed the breadth of his shoulders, the narrow-

ness of his hips as he stooped down, the swollen muscles of his arms, and as he turned towards me the square forehead, the firm mouth, the prominent nose. He was a picture of health and strength, his beard dark as his hair but for the streaks of grey in them, his eyes brave and steadfast, except when he talked of Chingford Lucas, and then they were restless, and wandered as one who sought something, or as one who suffered mentally.

"What are you thinking of?" he asked, as he laid the shares and a bundle of greenbacks upon the table.

"I was thinking what a strong fellow you are, and how well you look."

"I never felt stronger, never better—a mind at rest, that's it."

"And is your mind at rest?"

"For the first time since I ran away from the vicarage at Sandwich."

"I was also thinking how strange it is that Margaret should be your sister, and that I should come all this way to give you tidings of her."

"Yes."

"And that but for meeting Mr. Wilkess at Chicago I should probably have never come to the Gulch."

"Yes, it seems as if Manny Wilkess had been sent to meet you—as if my early prayers had been all this time reaching Heaven."

"Do you think, then, that Heaven has elaborated its answer, even to the importation of the Tombstone banker into the scheme?"

"I don't quite know what I think, but I feel that Heaven, or Fate, or what you like, has decreed that Chingford Lucas is to be punished in this world whatever may happen in the next, and that the vow that boy made over his father's dead body at Sandwich was not an empty one."

"But you don't think Heaven would have any hand in the anticipation of its judgment and vengeance by mortal means? You don't think that prayers such as you have offered up are anything but impious? I am not offering opinions, only asking questions."

"Right, youngster, I am not offended. The discussion is pleasant. It helps to show me the path. It clears the way. If a sparrow does not fall without Heaven's permission, do you think it will not interfere to save the wolf Lucas, if he is worth it?"

"I hope it will interfere to save you from committing a crime."

"Don't say that," he answered quickly, "unless you regard the fulfilment of my vow a crime."

"I do."

"Had you the cause for revenge that I have, and you met the betrayer of your mother, the murderer of your father, would you not kill him?"

"I think not. It would be a poor revenge that should end in my being hanged for murder."

"If when you get back to England you found that this man Lucas had forced your sweetheart into a position worse than death, what would you do?"

"You put an impossible case," I replied, fencing with the question, as the blood rushed into my face.

"Not at all," he said coolly; "he is capable of it; he is the sort of man who would sell her for fifty pounds if he wanted the money."

"But there must be two to such a bargain," I said.

"Oh, no," he replied; "a convenient place and time and a little chloroform, nothing easier."

"Great Lord!" I exclaimed, beside myself, as I followed my host's suggestion. "Don't torture me!"

"And supposing when you got back to London she should confess her shame as Lucretia told hers in the classic story, what would you do?"

"Tear the life out of him!" I exclaimed, pacing

the hut, to be stopped in my mad career by the grip of my host's strong hand.

"Of course you would, the beast!" he exclaimed. "Kill him as you would a wolf in your sheep-fold! Ah! my friend, don't set up for a Christian philosopher. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin: a kindred misery and woe binds together the most opposite of men."

"Why should you try to make me as wretched as yourself?" I said, facing him.

"I don't try to do anything of the kind, and I mean to make you happy. And I know the case I put to you is an impossibility. For if Margaret is dishonoured she is dead. That is how I feel about Margaret. But she is neither dead nor dishonoured. She is waiting for you to come and marry her at the church in her native town. Cheer up, old fellow; but don't preach, don't lecture me—don't try to make a law for me you would not obey yourself."

Then we gradually simmered down into our previous condition of calm, and he talked of Sandwich, told me incidents of his intercourse with the vicar, and made a curious comparison between the vicar and Wilkess, contrasting their good qualities, and speculating as to what sort of a man the vicar would have been with Manwaring's training, and

what Manwaring would have been in the vicar's shoes.

"I think it would be quite possible," he said, presently, "under certain circumstances, that I might come to love Sandwich as I think I did when I began to climb our garden wall to look over and see the river and the country beyond, when I went into the fields and gathered March marigolds, and, later in the year, meadow-sweet and 'trembling grass.'"

It occurred to me at that moment to tell him all about my visit to Sandwich, and to compare notes with him about that gloomy past which had so filled his mind as to set up a disease there, a morbid desire to usurp the judgment and work of Heaven—for so I regarded his fell designs upon Lucas. For the third or fourth time, second thoughts checked my half-uttered words, and I merely said,—

"Why did you change your name?"

"From George to Richard, from Newbolde to Drummond? Why, for the same reasons that he changed his from Chingford Lucas to Fitzherbert Willoughby. We have been in hiding—he from me, I from him. He would know I should be on his track; I was equally certain that he would steer clear of any fellow who called himself George Newbolde. Drummond

was the name of an ancestor of my father's, and Richard was my grandfather's Christian name."

"Ah, George, if I had only the influence upon you that a brother might claim," I said, "what a happy future there might be in store for us. Have you never, in your wanderings, met some woman with whom you could pass your days? Have you never loved?"

"Yes, my father and his memory, my sister, you. Is there no love, think you, but the selfish love of man and woman? I love my Hate. An odd notion, is it not? You lovers of a pretty girl think yours is the only engrossing passion. Why, it is transient as the summer breeze compared with the miser's love of his gold, fleeting as a shadow compared with the unsatisfied yearning of a just hatred. Go to, as they say in the plays, thou hast no eloquence in thy tongue to thaw my frozen purpose. Let us to our affairs."

He separated the mining scrip into two bundles.

"There is your proportion of the Revenge Mine," he said, pushing one half towards me. "You can hold it, or let it be sold. And here are three thousand dollars in bills that shall represent your share of the current month's dividend, or what you will. Take them, partner, brother, don't be shame-faced, they are yours."

I hesitated.

"They have been well earned, honourably won, every share, every inch of land, every dollar I possess."

"I am sure of it; but not by me," I said.

"For her sake, then. You elected to marry her when you thought her a penniless girl, and a girl without a name; she is not penniless, she has a name. Take your share of the money she brings you—if not for your own sake, for hers."

I took up the money.

"The shares are payable to bearer," he said, "but first require my signature. I will deposit them for you in the bank at Leadville. I leave you to-day; this place may not be so safe when it is known I am away, and even the stage by which you will travel to Leadville is not the safest of conveyances. At Leadville you can take a draft on London for all or part of the stock—they know its value. You could draw on the Revenge even at Chicago, new as is Drummond's Gulch, a mere mining camp, unrecorded on the maps."

We had hardly completed this division of property when a foxy-looking gentleman arrived, sat down at the table without ceremony, and produced three documents.

“ Shall I read ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” said my partner.

The foxy gentleman read a brief, but explicit partnership deed, in which, for due consideration of services and relationship, I was installed as the partner of Richard Drummond, otherwise George Newbolde, in the Revenge, and other mining properties and lands in and about Drummond’s Gulch.

“ Your coloured gentleman at home ? ” asked the lawyer.

“ Wash ! ” shouted my partner.

“ Yes, sah.”

“ Lawyer wants you.”

“ Yes, sah.”

“ Sign,” said the lawyer, motioning to us ; “ and you, Wash, observe.”

“ Yes, sah.”

We signed two of the documents.

“ Now what is *your* name ? ”

“ Washington Cæsar Lee,” said the old darkey, grinning.

“ Can you write ? ”

“ No, massa, I can jest read de book of Genesis.”

“ Then make your mark here—that signifies you have seen these gentlemen sign these papers.”

“ Yes, sah.”

Wash made his mark.

"This third document is only the draft; I take that to Denver; it goes into the archives; shall not be round here again for eight weeks; anything more?"

"No, sir."

"One hundred dollars."

"There you are," said my partner, handing him the money; "and keep this agreement for me in your safe with the draft. I'm going to Europe; don't know when I will return; but Washy stays here and keeps house. Whenever you, or any other member of the firm, travel this way, call and see that Wash is all right, and make your headquarters here."

"Yes, sir; good-bye, good luck," said the foxy gentleman, taking up his hat and bowing himself out.

"Business-like fellow—one of the travelling representatives of a great firm of mining lawyers at Denver, Leadville, and the newest of new cities—Jamaica," said my partner. "Take care of that deed; it will grow in value, grow day by day. When do you start for London? I advise your going at once. Washy!"

"Yes, sah."

"Take care of the hut."

"Yes, sah."

"I am off to Denver and Chicago, thence to Europe, not to be back for a long time. You know the sheriff?"

"Yes, sah."

"If you want advice or assistance of any kind, go to him."

"Yes, sah."

"And if he can't do all you want, go to Joe Larkins."

"Yes, sah."

"And here is a letter."

"Yes, sah."

"This one with a cross in the corner—give it to the sheriff."

"Yes, sah."

"And this without a cross is for Joseph Larkins, manager of the Revenge."

"Yes, sah."

"Deliver them to-morrow."

"Yes, sah."

"Get me my belt and my repeater."

Washy brought a leather waist-band that was literally a purse, and a cartridge belt, and with it a Winchester rifle.

“And now go down to the camp, tell Lady Ann, with my respectful compliments—mind the respectful compliments, Washy.”

“Yes, ’deed I will, sah.”

“That I will thank her to have the snorter saddled and ready for me at ten o’clock—it is now nine—and the grey mare with Dick Ooley on her back, and tell him to have his shooting-irons in order.”

“Yes, sah.”

“Now listen, that is not all—then she can send up somebody from the mine to carry my luggage down to ‘The Castle,’ and put it aboard the Leadville and Denver stage in the morning, checked for the bank at Leadville, do you understand?”

“Yes, sah.”

“Then away you go.”

And away Washy went as far as he could slither and slide down the mountain into the valley below.

“You could go by the same stage if you wished,” he said, “but I would advise your taking the stage that goes to Leadville next Monday, four days hence, and ends its journey there. It is a well-appointed stage, and the baggage is checked for the cars. You get two or three hours in Leadville, time enough to see our friend Wilkess at the bank; he is away from

Tombstone for a few days. Get your drafts on London, then a through ticket by the cars to Chicago, thence to New York, and then oh for England, with your happiness all before you, a good mother and a good girl awaiting you. Yes, that is the stage for you to take. You can pack at your leisure, write letters home, and get there, perhaps, as soon as the mail. I go a somewhat different route, and if you go by to-morrow's stage, you may be in Leadville before the scrip. So Monday's stage be it, eh?"

"Yes, since that is your advice," I said.

"It is," he said; "and now, good-bye!"

I looked at him reluctantly.

"Good-bye, brother," he said, putting out his hand.

"It is so sudden," I replied.

"Better now than next week," he said, looking me straight in the eye, "for I am beginning to like you—to feel happy in your companionship."

"Then better next week than now," I said.

"No, no," he answered. "I have been waiting years for the message you brought me only a few days ago, and now it seems years since you brought it. I would not have believed it possible that I could have desired to postpone for one hour the work that es before me; but this morning, looking at

your amiable face, listening to your soothing views of life, thinking what pleasant chums we might be, now that I am no longer, nor shall ever be again, a slave to whisky, I wavered—I wavered, and said to myself, ‘Oh, if it were possible to forget, if not to forgive, to forget, and—’”

“Surely,” I exclaimed, “it was a good inspiration?”

“No, it was a touch of human infirmity—what you will. I have corrected it with a dose of the old memory. Once again I have traversed the road from the Sandwich Station to the old house, my hand in my father’s; I have recalled his sweet words of hope, and seen all his awakened ambition blasted in that ruined home; I have seen the beloved but unfortunate dead, and heard the son promise to avenge the father. No, friend, brother, it may not be, that brief dream of companionship; I could not be happy even in the thought of it for more than a moment.”

“Oh, if it were possible! Would to God he might be dead now!”

“No, he will live to meet me. There is a Providence doth shape our ends. Do you think you would have been sent out here merely to baulk me at the last? Be reasonable, Hickory. There is a rosy future for you. Come here.”

He led me to the door.

"There it is—right away over yonder where the sun rises—the bridge at Sandwich. You don't see it, but I do. I am standing there in the sunshine. I have seen the kind old vicar place Maggie's hand in yours, I have seen her beaming face, with her dead brother's loving eyes; I can hear the wedding bells. And by all that is good and true, by your love for her, by her happiness, I claim the fulfilment of your pledge, as Fate claims the fulfilment of mine. Do you draw back?"

"No."

"I can trust you?"

"You can."

"I do."

I still wonder whether I ought to have accepted the situation. I look back and feel that I was powerless to resist it. He had a stronger personality, surely, than I. There was a magnetism in his individuality. He had the gift of command—I was as wax in his hands. He ordered, I obeyed. It would have been so had I been a hundred men, he one. It was so in the camp; he commanded, he was the chief, "the Boss of Drummond's Gulch."

"Good-bye!" he said, "good-bye, brother. Henceforth strangers—for evermore. Think only of her;

let me know and feel that she is happy, that the balance of her life shall atone for the misery of its beginning. That will make me happy—that, and—”

He paused and took my hand.

“But that is my affair; good-bye.”

He turned and waved his hand at the door, and was gone. I had not the heart to look out after him. I sat staring at the open door, and I saw the mountains away beyond the river. I sat as one in a dream, until the negro returned with two men from the camp, who carried away with them “de massa’s baggage.”

They trailed out a heavy trunk between them. I watched them as far as I could see them, picking their way down the rocky path among the trees.

It seemed to me as if they were carrying a coffin. I felt the tears welling up into my eyes, as they did when I followed my father to his grave.

The sun was shining, the world all about me looked lovely, but there was a great black shadow upon it.

At last the men with the coffin (I could only think of it, do what I would, as a coffin) disappeared, and I seemed to hear a funeral bell tolling in the distance. Then my troubled fancy conjured up

the parson's words; I saw an open grave; I heard the emblems of mortality fall upon the coffin, and the words "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." I leaned against the door-post of the hut quite unmanned, and almost sobbed, "Good-bye, dear friend—good-bye, good-bye!"

## CHAPTER IX.

## SIR THOMAS GOES OUT TO FIGHT THE INDIANS.

Now that my host and benefactor had really gone, I felt as if he had died and I was in possession of his goods; as if I had been at the reading of a will, and had come into the property of a relative whom I loved. When I was a little fellow I lost a brother. We had been playmates. He was eight and I was ten. I could not realize that he was dead, and when I took his little treasures of toy soldiers and tin trumpets to my own room because he wished it in his dying moments, I felt as if I had stolen them. I never played with them any more, never blew another blast upon the tin trumpets.

The sensation of that long past came back to me now, and instead of packing my things to start away for England, I sat staring at them, and feeling towards some of them, and particularly in respect of the money in my purse, as if I had come into a painful inheritance.

“Done take on so, Massa Maynard,” said Washy,

putting his kind old woolly head in at the open door; "you's going home to your people."

"Yes, Wash, old fellow, but where is the boss going?"

"Not much long way; and he hab no people, I tink, only me."

He grinned at his own suggestion of relationship.

"He's a wanderer on de bressed earth; I heard him say so often; and once he right down tole me he only hab two friends in de whole wide world—me and a ole parson. And dat once was not when he gotten drunk, but sick and sad as a ole doughnut. Ah! poor Massa Newbolde, I talk to him den, and say wonder he had not rest him faith in de Lord since he hab two such friends, me and de ole parson, both of which was ob de true faith. But he only smile at me and say dat de ignorance of some folk was more bressed in de result dan all de wisdom of de oders which was wise as Solomon."

"He was only angry and savage, then, when he had been drinking?"

"Dat's all; when he was sick and sorry, as he would say, den no pusson could be more gentle, no pusson could listen more solemner to de good Word than him, no pusson could smile more discredulos of it, though I would go on talking as I gib him his

soup, or his toast, or his posset, or what not; and den when he gotten better and sat up, he would smoke and smoke, and tink and tink, wid his eyes looking out across de riber yonder, so that you'd tink he was trying to look right into dat bery heaben I don't believe he eber had de true faith in. 'It's nice, Washy,' he was once say, 'for you to believe in dem golden slippers and de golden stairs, and all dat;' and I said it was de only tink dere was to lib and die for. And he says, 'Is you happy, Washy?' and I says, 'Yes, wid a good massa, plenty to eat, and heaben at last, what could I want more?' And he said, 'Dat's right; I'm glad somebody's happy.' And I says right away, 'It's you as has inade me so—you and de bressed Bible.' ”

“You have had quite long conversations with him, then?”

“Oh, yes, and he has conversed wid me oderwise when he were on de bender; wid de whisky in him, he has talked to me wid de boot-jack and de fire-irons—yas, dat he hab, the dear, kind boss!”

At the recollection of which Washy shuffled away laughing, and left me to my reflections. My negro gossip had not coaxed them out of the channel in which they were drifting. And he talked of Dick more or less as if he were dead, and gave me

glimpses of the pathetic side of the poor fellow's character—the poor fellow who had worked and fought and struggled that I might inherit his wealth.

“You will be rich,” he had said, “rich!” I pulled myself together, tried to shake off my morbid thoughts, stopped looking back, got up, walked about, and looked into the future. I was already rich.

The idea staggered me. Rich! With money enough to travel *en prince*, with money enough to hire the captain's room on an Atlantic steamer, with money enough to marry my love straight away.

How I longed for a portrait of her! And how I wondered that I had none. We were too much in earnest, I suspect, to exchange portraits. Our hours were too deeply mortgaged with work and hope to be wasted in sitting for portraits. Her features were engraven on my heart; what did I want more?

His sister! I did not love her the less for that, but his story lent a mystery to our relations that seemed to shadow the brightness of her eyes. And she was not to know of the existence of this brother. I was never to mention him. She was to remain in

ignorance of him and of all his kindness to me. I was not to tell her the story of my life and vows at Drummond's Gulch.

"Massa's very melancholy," said the old negro servant, returning. "Sometimes Massa Drummond read in his book, and dat cheer him."

"And sometimes he talked to you, and that cheered him, eh, Washy?"

"Can't begin to say if it cheered him," he replied, grinning.

"Anyhow, talk to me, Washy; come, sit down."

He hitched up his trousers and squatted upon a low stool.

"I'se melancholy, too," he said.

"About the boss going away?"

"Not all on dat account."

"But you are sorry he has gone?"

"Not like de sorry that comes ob parting for good until we meets again on de golden shore."

"No, of course not."

"Massa Drummond come back again."

"I hope so."

"I know he come back."

"Why?"

"Hab he not tell me he come back, and gib me money and tell me take care ob de house, and all

dat ; but some bosses dey go and neber come back no more."

I took this as a kindly tribute to myself.

"You are thinking of me ; it is very good of you, Washy."

"Not dizactly, and yet dat's so," he said, in an embarrassed kind of way.

"How do you mean ?"

"You not go away for eber."

"I shall not return to the Gulch," I said.

"Bery sorry you say so ; no wish serve a kinder gentleman. Grief me say good-bye, but grief me more if it was dat last parting, and only to meet again in de happy land. As I said befo', you return to yo' people ober de sea, and dey wait to welcome yo'—dat sweetheart and dat mudder."

"Yes, thank God !" I said.

"Amen !" responded Washy.

"But I don't know what you are driving at."

"I was just driving at Sir Thomas," he said, rising, "since you fo'ce me to speak, and dat's de truth."

"What of Sir Thomas ?"

"When I fust came to de door to speak it was 'bout Sir Thomas, only you look so melancholy I done like to say noting. Done like bring bad news when massa's sad already at de begin with."

“What is it, Washy?”

“It’s valour.”

“Valour!”

“Dat’s de word for it. Right down valour.”

“Down at the ‘Castle!’”

“Some ob it.”

“It’s generally whisky there,” I said; “but what is it?”

“Tain’t whisky now,” said Washy; “it’s valour, sah. Nobody thought as Massa Thomas was brave—didn’t look it, neider—but it’s valour as is de trouble; he’s been and gone off wid Ugly Jim and Barkin’ Billy and de rest to fight de Injuns, and Lady Ann she is dat feared, she goin’ on a-cryin’ to dat extent it’s miserable to see.”

“To fight the Indians! Where? And why?”

“You hearn ’em down at de camp a talkin’ ob striking de mineral treasure at de Ute Valley?”

“Yes.”

“Well, ’pears as de Injuns come down on de pioneers and massacre dem, just as ’pears dey come down on Massa Drummond when he fust come dis side de Rockies; and Ugly Jim and a lot ob de Gulch men has gone out wid dere guns and things and a waggon ob tinned meat and bread and whisky, to settle de trouble wid de Injuns for

good, jest as Massa Drummond settled dem here at de Gulch."

"Well?"

"'Tain't well, massa."

"I mean what more?"

"Ain't dat enough?"

"There is no news of them, then?"

"No."

"And you think the Indians will get the best of it?"

"Yes, sah."

"And that poor Sir Thomas will be killed, if he is not killed already?"

"Dat's so," said Washy.

"Why?"

"Why do I think so? because I hab no faith in Ugly Jim, and de whisky-drinkin' crowd dat fight for him. When de Injun on de war-path he lie in de bush, he wait, he watch, he is cautious as de ole bear, and secret and creep like de serpent. And what is de Gulch crowd dat go out? A noisy, drunken crew, loafers and swearers; and de like of poor little Sir Thomas be no good to go on short commons, and sleep in de bush, and wade through de ribers. It's good-bye to de little boss ob de 'Castle.'"

“But Mister Drummond, he fought the Indians when they were on the war-path?”

“Ah, dat’s bery different; dey tole me, de ole fellers at de mine, dat in dem days Boss Drummond he drink no whisky, he swear no odes, he could break a rock wid his fist, and ride de wildest hoss dat ever was, and fight de biggest Injun dat eber took a scalp. Dey tole me he don’t go out wid a cart and kitchen stuff, and whisky in bottles and whisky in de flask; he go out, and de handful of de pioneers wid him, he go out like de Injun scout himself, he go out as keen and strong as any fightin Injun, and his men dat go wid him are silent men, wot do not talk and sing and shout, and dey wushups de ground Boss Drummond walk on, and follow him, de ole men say, to hell if he lea’d; which was profane speaking, I allow, but it make de ignorant understand what men dem was, what a leader dey hab, and how poor de chance ob dem Injuns!”

“That is very true, Washy, and very well put.”

“Yes, sah,” he replied, “and dat’s why I’s melancholy about de kind little Boss who will neber come back to de camp; I’s sure as if I see his scalp in de fighting Injun’s belt.”

I went down to the camp, and found that it was true what Washington said; Lady Ann was disconsolate.

"Yes," she said, "the boys have gone to punish the Utes, or whatever the red devils call themselves, and my poor fool of a Tommy has gone along. He'll get killed to a certainty."

She was sitting in a corner of the saloon. Two miners were playing roulette, two others betting in a languid kind of way. The place gave you the idea of suspense. It seemed as if it was waiting for something or somebody.

"And it will be two weeks before they can get back even if they lick the Indians, which they don't always do; and I shall be a widow as sure as my name is Lady Ann Montgomery! And that is my name. Poor fellow! My real own name; I'm a titled lady with the right to be stuck up among the best of the English aristocracy! And he's the only man I ever cared a red cent for—too good for me by a sight, but I've been true to him and stood by him, in sunshine and in storm, as they say, and I'd lay my life down for him if it would do him any good—and that's a fact."

"He will come home a hero, Lady Ann," I said; "never fear!"

"But I do fear, and I'm dead certain he won't come home a hero, and I don't care if he comes home to be called a coward so that he comes. It won't

matter to you or to Boss Drummond, however," she said, suddenly changing her tone; "he's off for Europe, and you are going to-morrow, ain't you?"

"Yes," I said.

"And glad to shake the Gulch dust off your shoes, eh?"

"I have been very happy here," I said.

"And who's going to take care of me?" she said, "now all the braves have gone to fight the Indians? It's time I left this place, I think, unless we give consent for the boys to marry and bring their wives. I did say that I would quit the moment another woman turned up here, but I guess I kinder long to see a woman's face to-day, that's a fact."

She sighed and cast a weary glance around, and I pitied her. A fine buxom woman, as I have said before, Lady Ann had had a "career," and a physiognomist could see the lines of it in her countenance. There were premature "crows' feet" about her dark eyes, a scar upon the left cheek, her mouth was sensuous, though it was more generous than sensual in its characteristics. Her hair was black with the slightest tinge of grey; her shoulders a trifle too high for gracefulness of carriage; and she had a habit of sitting in a huddled up kind of way that, to say the least, was not lady-like. More-

over, in the expression of her face, and in her general manner, there were tokens of a dormant temper, a possible rage, an unbounded courage, that in an emergency could do more than unpack itself in words. She had a powerful physique; and when she said, "I'd like to catch on to one of them Indians if anything happens to my Tommy," you fully realized that if she did it would go hard with the red man.

"I know he'll never come back," she said in a low voice, "because he went without telling me, he went and never said good-bye with his own lips, not even a shake of the hand."

"That should be a good omen," I said.

"But it ain't; he knowed I would never have given my consent, and if I wouldn't, then you may be sure it was a dangerous business, because I'd have like to have him pleased, and if it were just going on a spree I guess he should have gone and had my blessing. Besides, he's left me a bit of paper and written on it, 'Good-bye, Ann, my dear old girl, and lawful wife,' and signed his name in full, and what does he mean by that? Why, it's as plain to me as is the light of the Revenge smelter; he thinks he may never come back, and he wants me respected as his widow if I go to the old country

to claim my rights. That's what the boy means. And they will have lured him to his death, the mean loafers. What can he do, camping out, laying around for Indians, and hasn't the strength of a baby if it comes to fighting a rainstorm, let alone Indians? By my soul, if he gets shot, I'll let daylight into Ugly Dick, and don't you forget it!"

"Don't look on the dark side of the picture," I said. "I have known many an English gentleman who did not look as if he had a penn'orth of fight in him, nor a ha'porth of strength, who has astonished giants in the way of pluck and staying powers. In the English wars there have been boy-leaders of forlorn hopes, who have done greater deeds than the biggest and strongest of their followers."

"That's all right," said Lady Ann, wiping away her tears; "but don't I know my Tommy? Have I nursed him, and don't know how weak a case God has put a big heart into! Don't tell me he'll break down at the first trouble. He'll fight, oh, yes, that's the worst of it, and he won't run away, not he, bless the dear little feller's courage; but he can't sleep out o' nights, and get wet, and hot, and thirsty, and fatigued, and fight great hulking Indians, and come back; how can it be expected?"

If I'd that Ugly Jim by the throat, I'd give him a grip that would settle his Indian fighting for the rest of his whisky-tub life."

She cried with sorrow and with passion, with rage and fear, and then sat down and rocked herself to and fro, and taking my hand, said,—

"Mister, you are a countryman of his; you are going to his native land; if you hear about him there, say a good word for him—the best fellow I ever knew, and the dearest at this moment, else why do I feel it here at my heart, and why do I wish for the first time that there was a woman in the camp, that I might tell her what I feel and think?"

"Cheer up," I said, "and never say die. It is your own motto; I have heard you use it. I believe he will come back, and come back a hero—the best and bravest of the lot."

"If he does," she said, "he will be all that, I know, and I will tell him what you said. Give me your hand, and let me thank you for your cheery words. I'll try to think as you say, and if the worst comes to the worst, I'll revenge him as sure as my name is, as I said before, Lady Ann Montgomery."

I could not help wondering what Mayfair would think of this latest addition by marriage to the English aristocracy.

"Let us drink to his good luck, and to his safe return," I said, placing upon the table a ten-dollar bill.

"Jim," said Lady Ann, "bottle of wine."

"Glasses for the gentlemen," I added, pointing to the other occupants of the saloon, who had just finished their game.

They came forward, joined in the toast, and Lady Ann did likewise.

I do not remember to have had any bad dreams since that night (some three years prior to this one, at Sandwich) after getting excited over the Vicar's story. Whether it was the solemn hot supper which Lady Ann insisted I and three other guests should take with her at the 'Castle,' or the extra quantity of whisky I drank to soothe my thoughts; or whether it was the reflex of some serious thoughts that occurred to me while picking my way with a six-shooter in one hand and a dark lantern in the other to the hut at midnight, and being met with a "Tank de Lord" by Wash, who concluded that I had been shot or gone off after the Indians; why it was, I know not, but on that last night at the hut I had a dream of consecutive events that covered years. I was a boy, and lived at Sandwich; the vicar killed my sister; I was educated at

an old house that was haunted ; I grew up and fell in love with a girl, who on the day I was to be married turned out to be a ghoul ; I ran off to Liverpool, got on board a ship bound for Drummond's Gulch, it landed me at the ' Castle,' and sailed away ; and before it was well out of sight on the river of the Indian Valley, the red men fell upon us, Lady Ann saving my scalp at the risk of her own life, and as a reward demanding my hand in marriage, which accepting, I was raised to the peerage ; and I awoke in the midst of a speech in which I was advocating the exclusion of the Bishops from the Upper House of Parliament.

When I had turned up the lamp, and convinced myself that I was really at Drummond's Gulch a free man, I began to ponder whether I had not better take the morning's stage, and begin my journey back to the regions of civilization at once. But on reflection I felt that I owed it to my host and benefactor to act upon his advice and wait. He might have some special reason for wishing me, as he evidently did, to take the stage four days hence.

Judging by his later movements, it formed part of his programme that I should wait.

By-and-by, when the sun made his glorious presence known behind the mountains in the east,

flooding the sky with a golden glory; and presently adding deeper and more radiant tints to the shumach, the maple, and the oak, I went out and saw the day break—the day which was indeed to separate me from George Newbolde, the founder of the town of Drummond's Gulch, for the remainder of our days, just as if he were really dead and buried.

“To-morrow, good-bye; the next day, strangers.”

The morrow in that account had come and gone; the next day in that account had arrived, and I began to try and wipe yesterday out of my memory.

## CHAPTER X.

### GOOD-BYE TO DRUMMOND'S GULCH AND TO LADY ANN.

A STRANGE week, full of thoughts and fancies that "favoured" George Newbolde, applying the word as nurses use it in regard to the likenesses between parents and children. A week of curious fancies and reflections, dominated by the spirit of my absent partner. I often seemed to be thinking as if my mental faculties had been inoculated with his ideas of things. His was clearly the stronger nature of the two. He had imbued my mind with his philosophy, if his speculations and opinions could be called philosophy.

Instead of looking at the world cheerfully, I had fits of gloom. Fortunately they were followed with happy thoughts of home, and Maggie, and Doughty Street, and the last time I saw my love.

But what had I to do with gloomy thoughts? The sun shone gloriously, and if a passing breath of September frost had painted a maple here and there,

and bronzed a young oak, that only made the woods look more lovely.

The fluttering burr of the locust, and the occasional song of the hermit thrush, flattered the ear with summer sounds, and the katydids at eventide offered their monotonous music as lullabies to solemn memories.

It seemed a year, this week ; and yet how George Newbolde had watched the birth and death of days and weeks and months with a canker in his heart !

I think the poor woman down at the " Castle " (what unconscious satire on themselves, that name, seeing that the poor lost owner could date his origin back to lordly castles and rich domains !) made me miserable. She had sent out messengers away into the Elk mountains and beyond for news of the expedition against the Indians, and she waited for their return with a great fear in her heart. Strange that this woman, with a history that had trailed its skirts through the mud of western camps, and had careered through the gambling saloons of San Francisco, should be whining over the absence of her boy lover.

The human heart is a strange mystery ; the mind of woman a puzzle of curious moods and fancies.

My lady of the Gulch was worn with fretting and with fear; and the revival, as it were, of her better nature, her original girlish purity, shall I say, in her eyes, gave to her face a new expression. You could not help thinking as you looked at her that she had once been really beautiful; and you found yourself looking back to the day when she might have been the joy and pride of a happy home.

A strange, long, weary week, waiting for the Leadville stage.

Washington Cæsar Lee did all he could to minister to my comforts; and in the evening, when I smoked and took my coffee, he would come in and talk of the Gulch, of Massa Drummond, of Lady Ann, Sir Thomas, and "de good Lord." It steered my thoughts into stiffer grooves of faith than they had been of late inclined to keep, listening to the simple words of poor old Washy, who was on the most familiar and friendly terms with divine persons.

I wrote long letters to Maggie, and longer still to my mother. In addressing Maggie I always had a fear that somehow Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby would lay his hands upon my letters; so I enclosed special notes for her to my mother, and sent sweet messages that way as well; though I had misgivings even then that my mother might not see her.

After I had worried myself for hours at a stretch with miserable possibilities, a successful effort to conjure up her face, and her trustful eyes as they looked at me when she and I parted two years ago, put me back into a cheerful frame of mind.

And then, going from one extreme to the other, I became hilarious over the reflection that I was rich ; that my ambition to provide a cottage for Maggie in a London suburb, backed up with say two or three hundred pounds a year, was child's-play compared with what I could do now. Where should we live? Not in Doughty Street, nor even in Mecklenburgh Square. My mother would live with us. We would have one of those fine houses in Park Lane. How would my mother like that? Perhaps I would go in for Parliament. No, I would not be ambitious, except in regard to the happiness of my wife and my mother.

At last the week was ended, the week that seemed a year ; and one bright September morning I waved my hand from the stage in token of a last adieu to Lady Ann (poor Lady Ann !) and her staff of bar clerks and ostlers. No news had come in from the avengers who had gone after the Utes into the Elk mountains, and the mining camp had more than a usually gloomy appearance. I think I felt sorry

for everybody who had to stay there. The sky was blue, the atmosphere bright, the stars and stripes flew gaily above the "Castle," but I was looking far away to the green shores of England. With the sad face of the landlady of the tavern in my mind, I could quite fancy that her United States banner might be half-masted on the morrow in honour of the rash little English lord and his comrades on the war-path.

I little thought that I too might be in danger of becoming a candidate for the aforesaid honour before many hours had passed.

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